A SERIES of

GENUINE LETTERS

BETWEEN

12653.a.5

HENRY and FRANCES.

Felices ter et ampliùs
Quos irrupta tenet copula; nec malis
Divulſus querimoniis,
Suprema citiûs ſolvet amor die.
HOR. Lib. I. Od. 13.

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A SERIES OF

LETTERS

BETWEEN

HENRY and FRANCES.

LETTER CLXIX.

I FLATTER myſelf that, by this time, my deareſt life is intirely cured of all apprehenſions ariſing from my ſilence. You could not ſure ſuſpect me of neglect; and had I been ſo ill, as to prevent my writing, Kitty would certainly have acquainted you. There remains but one hope of my letters not being intercepted, that my dear, giddy Harry forgot his deſiring me to addreſs them to Gowran. This, I hope, is the occaſion of your complaint, and that you have, ſince your laſt, received four letters from me.

Now let me unburthen my heart, and lament the loſs of that moſt amiable of women, and beſt of friends, my Lady O——. It is too true, that ſhe quits Ireland next month, with a reſolution not to return, for ſome years. What a ſcheme of

elegant happineſs is now deſtroyed! How have I pleaſed myſelf with thinking that, on knowing, you would love and eſteem her, as much as I do! Where, when ſeparate from you, ſhall I find a friend, whoſe converſation can, at once, delight, and improve! whoſe ſprightlineſs can chear the preſent hour, and point the way, to make the future happy! indeed, my deareſt Harry, I ſigh for your loſs too, when I conſider myſelf as the object of your affection. I admired, and would have endeavoured to copy her; that nobleneſs of ſentiment, uniformity of manners, and that calm, chearful reſolution, which ſhone through all her conduct, would have been ſtronger leſſons to your Fanny, than all the volumes of Philoſophy that were ever wrote; for her actions illuſtrated their arguments, and proved to demonſtration, that what they preſcribed, was practicable. But, to ſhew that ſuch a bright example has not been wholly thrown away on me, I will endeavour to imitate even the hardeſt part of her character; that of chearfully reſigning the perſon we love, when we hope, and believe it for their happineſs. I will now no longer murmur at loſing, what I eſteemed the ſecond bleſſing of my life; ſhe goes to her lord; may ſhe find in him a due reward of all her merits! my utmoſt wiſh for her, is that—no more—for more were vain.

All I can tell you of Kitty's affair is, that ſhe has run directly counter to your's, mine, and Nancy's advice; and is now under the tuition of ——, and her grandmother. Though I have been in the houſe near three weeks, ſhe has never mentioned the matter to me, nor I to her. I ſincerely rejoice at her ſilence on this ſubject, for it is indeed a nice affair to adviſe in.

As often as your leiſure will admit, I ſhall be pleaſed with your obſervations on Pliny; for, though

though I have not the books by me, at preſent, they will afford me a double delight, when I have.

I expect a letter from Lady O——, by to-morrow poſt, which will, I believe, either fix the time for, or entirely put off our journey to C——. If the latter ſhould happen, tell me, my heart's dear Harry, may I not hope to ſee you here? I am forbidden to go near you; will you not ſoften that cruel interdiction, by coming to her, who is, and ever will be, ſincerely and affectionately

Your's,

FRANCES.

LETTER CLXX.

My deareſt FANNY,

I RECEIVED all your letters ſafe from Gowran, which, with two from Kilkenny, I have now before me, to anſwer. I do not remember to have ever had ſo much pleaſure, at once, in your abſence, as at preſent; ſuch "a feaſt of reaſon, "ſuch a flow of ſoul!" Conſider the pleaſure of your correſpondence, which would have been portioned out to a month's time, by a miſtake of the poſts, as it were, dammed up for a while, to ruſh upon me, in one inſtant, with a torrent of joy.

I declare to you unfeignedly, for indeed I never flattered you, that I never read any thing ſo infinitely more than pretty, ſo extremely fine and elegant, as your letters are; which I am the more remarkably ſenſible of at preſent; for as I have a collected body of them before me, they give ſtrength and beauty to each other: the only inhanced value, they are capable of receiving, being owing to themſelves. Upon my honour, when I read ſome paſſages, where the fineneſs of the ſentiment, the beauty of the ſtile, or the poetical, or

epigrammatical turn of the expreſſion is remarkable, I feel my heart move within me; and indeed, my Fanny, I ſhould not know I have an heart, but from the pleaſure, or pain, I receive from you. Now this ſenſation is not barely ſuch a one, as men of letters or taſte perceive, upon reading fine writing of any kind: For this, perhaps, I may be too phlegmatick: but I perceive ſuch an exultation, made up of joy, and pride, in my heart, as if (I ſpeak but by gueſs) I had ſaid ſuch things myſelf. But, upon this occaſion, all the vanity, I have to flatter myſelf with, is, that, next to the art of writing well, is that taſte, which is capable to judge of fine writing.

I never was ſenſible of any pain from receiving favours; but that want of power to expreſs my gratitude, I have a good notion of; and it proceeds from a fullneſs of heart, which, like a croud of ideas, or, in ſhort, like any other croud, prevents its own utterance. Gloſter ſays of Cordelia, "her full heart reverberates no hollow ſound of "emptineſs;" in me there is a little matter of pride, upon ſuch an occaſion, leſt, by too ſervile an acceptance of the favour, I ſhould appear unworthy of it; for I think too much expreſſion about the matter would make me look upon a perſon as an object fit for alms, rather than a ſubject proper for my friendſhip. There is a kind of honeſty too in my ſturdineſs, leſt I ſhould ſeem to mean the repaying a kindneſs, meerly with words.

I did recollect, at firſt, that you had not a Pliny by you, and therefore could not underſtand my letters: But I concluded that you would have ſent to ——, for his, which I beg you will do immediately, and read thoſe particular paſſages, which my letters relate to, by themſelves; and you can go regularly through the books, when I return you your's. I ſhall not mention one word more

more upon the ſubject, 'till you tell me you have got them, for my chief aim is to entertain you.

What you tell me about Lady O——, gives me a great deal of concern, upon your account: for it will be a very great loſs to you, in many particulars. What is the occaſion of this ſudden change of affairs? I ſhall have a great loſs of her too, as her uncommon cleverneſs, and unaffected manners have given me a ſincere eſteem and friendſhip for her; but your misfortune and mine are not to be mentioned together: For I ſhall have you, but you will want her. However, though you are deprived of the happineſs of a companion, you cannot loſe her, as a friend; for her regard and eſteem for you is founded upon your own ſenſe and merit, and will conſequently laſt with hers. This ſudden removal, I am afraid, will make it impoſſible for me to have the pleaſure of ſeeing you at C——: and indeed it would be improper to incumber her, at preſent, with a viſit.

Adieu!

HENRY.

LETTER CLXXI.

I AM almoſt aſhamed to acknowledge the receipt of my dear Harry's laſt letter. I abſolutely bluſh, while I think of it. I can bear any thing better than praiſe, which I do not deſerve: Yet praiſe from you will always be pleaſing to me; for, though I may be conſcious I do not merit it, yet I cannot diſtruſt your ſincerity; and ſure I ſhall always be delighted with your thinking I am what I would wiſh to be.

I by no means doubt your receiving much pleaſure from ſuch a bundle of my letters coming

at once to your hands. My idea of it is like paſſing a day together. Though the ſubject was often changed, the diſcourſe was continued; while a ſingle letter appears like a ſhort viſit, where the greateſt part of thoſe moments, we ſhould wiſh to employ more agreeably, is taken up with the form of coming in, and going out: Yet, I confeſs, I would rather ſee a perſon I loved, for half an hour every day, than be debarred that pleaſure for a month, though I were certain they would then ſtay a week with me; for I think the "joys of "meeting hardly pay the pangs of abſence." This may be owing to an impatience in my temper, which I would gladly correct, as it occaſions me many melancholy hours; for, alas! the greateſt part of my life is paſſed in a ſtate of ſeparation from you; and even when you are with me, the certainty of parting, at ſuch a time, embitters the preſent pleaſure. Pardon me, when I tell you that I have often ſuſpected your love, when I have ſeen you quit me, with as much indifference as you would a common acquaintance; while my poor fooliſh heart has heaved, and eyes ſtrained to follow you. I know you have ſo ſtrong an underſtanding, as would, were you poſſeſſed of ſuch a fond weakneſs, get the better of it; and yet, at this moment, I ſwear (I ſpeak from my own heart) I wonder how you can bear to be ſo long, and often, abſent. There is, I fear, but one way of accounting for it.—

I parted from Kitty, at Racoole, this morning: She preſſed me much to go with her: I own, I was ſtrongly prompted by inclination to accept her invitation; but durſt not venture, without your conſent. Nancy has promiſed to make her a viſit, by next Thurſday's ſtage: If you do not think it improper, and I do not hear from Lady O——, I ſhall gladly accompany her; but if you have any,

the

the leaſt objection, or are apprehenſive of any ill conſequence from my going, I conjure you, by your love, to ſpeak freely, and prevent me.

Lady O——'s going to ſettle in England is not a ſudden ſtart: ſhe always ſaid ſhe would go, whenever ſhe had completed her affairs here.

I have been at ——'s ever ſince I came to town: He has lent me his Pliny. A company, playing at cards by my ſide, ſtun me with their noiſe: I know not what I am writing; but this I know, that I am, with love, faith, and conſtancy,

Your's.

LETTER CLXXII.

HENRY to FRANCES.

BELIEVE me ſincere in my praiſes of you; for upon that ſubject, all hyperbole is loſt in truth. Whether, indeed, you really deſerve all that I think, which is ten-fold more than ever I ſaid of you, I cannot tell: Nay, ſometimes I fancy not; only for this reaſon, that I am afraid there is not, in reality, any woman in the world ſo charming, as I imagine you to be; yet your merit is the ſame to me, which is capable of inſpiring me with ſuch pleaſing ideas; as it amounts to the ſame, let ſceptics wrangle ever ſo long, whether there is ſuch a thing as matter in the univerſe, or whether it is only a ſpirit, which has the power of conveying ſuch an idea to our ſenſes. And, as the amiable opinion I have of my deareſt Fanny makes up moſt of my happineſs in this life, I ſhall conſider it as Cicero does an higher ſubject, "that if it ſhould "be a miſtake, I would not part with the belief

" of it, for a certainty of the higheſt good, in " this world *."

Your ſimile, with regard to your letters, has a pretty fancy in it; and there is a good deal of the ſame kind of turn in many of your writings, which has often made me declare, that I never met with any thing, in the epiſtolary ſtile, ſo very clever, as they are; ſo that, even abſtracted from the conſideration of their coming from you, and being addreſſed to me, I do not read any thing which gives me a more refined entertainment.

I take it very unkindly, your ſeeming to ſuſpect me of the leaſt indifference to you. Whenever I can be near you, how few hours am I from you? And, be aſſured, it is my misfortune, not my fault, that I am not conſtantly with you. If I do not always part from you with the appearance of that fondneſs, which you might expect, it is owing intirely to that temper, which I have endeavoured to practiſe myſelf into; as I have very little of it from nature. No man has more tenderneſs, or ſoft affection about his heart, than I have; and my philoſophy, which is not of the Stoic kind, does not make me feel leſs in myſelf, but only ſerves to ſave appearances to the reſt of the world. How often, my dear Fanny, have I moſt earneſtly intreated of you never to ſay any thing of that kind to me again? and, if you recollect yourſelf, you will find, we have had very few diſputes, but upon this ſubject.

HENRY.

* Quod ſi in hoc erro, quod animas hominum immortales eſſe credam, libenter erro: Nec mihi hunc errorem, quo delector, dum vivo, extorqueri volo, animas eſſe immortales. CIC.

LETTER CLXXIII.

SINCE you desire me to continue my notes upon Pliny, I shall go on with that subject again.

The first epistle of the third book puts me in mind of Lord Orrery's wish about the latter scenes of his life, hinted at in one of my former letters to you; and in the passage I here allude to, for want of better light from history, he supposes after what manner Pliny passed the decline of life; but I think the latter part of the letter, I am now upon, affords a strong presumption of this supposition; and, as Pliny desires Calvisus to keep that letter by him, in order to judge of his philosophy, so shall we remember Lord Orrery's declaration with the same view. I think the character of Spurinna not unlike his own; and there is one circumstance hinted at, when he takes the air in his chariot, in which they happily agree. In this letter there is a pretty distinction between being pleased, and being proud of a thing. "The only mark of age "he discovers, is prudence." This is a fine trait.

In the sixth epistle of the same book, in the comment on it, Lord Orrery gives us a gay ode, to divert our thoughts from the melancholy prospect of an old man; which is like the merry epilogues, they give us often, after our tragedies. This argument has been treated pro and con in the Spectators: But for my part, I always chuse to retire with the bier; for sober thoughts do me no harm, as I can be grave, without being melancholy. I am surprized his Lordship should say an old man was a dismal sight; for a person, who views all things

"In the calm light of mild philosophy,"

regards with equal eyes both youth and age; nay, I cannot think it requires any great ſtraining of philoſophy to bear even our own decay, as there are pleaſures and ſolations indulged by Providence to every ſtage of life; and, to a mind rightly turned, perhaps, not the leaſt to the laſt; and, if any uneaſineſs ariſes in our ſeneſcence, from a nearer proſpect of the grave, it is unbecoming a Chriſtian, who reſts in hope.

There is ſomething extremely elegant, and a fine addreſs of compliment, in ſeveral of Pliny's epiſtles, with a certain *tour d'expreſſion, et de ſentiment*, which is obſervable in the writings of the beſt and politeſt French authors. I ſhall give you but one example, among many; becauſe I would not prevent you, as you have not gone through his works. It is in the eighth epiſtle of this book: "And, ſince it is equally excellent to merit and "confer benefits, I ſee you are reſolved to lay "claim to the praiſe of both, by giving to an-"other what you have deſerved yourſelf."

In the obſervations upon the ſecond epiſtle of the fourth book, my Lord, after his humane way, reprimands Pliny for his frequent abuſe of Regulus; which, as I hinted, is an inſtance of his humanity, but not of his judgment. There are many men of vile deſerts, ſo far beyond the reach of laws, that there is no way to puniſh them, but by ſatire or invective; and I believe that ſeveral people, naturally vicious in themſelves, have been reſtrained within the bounds of ſocial morality, not from reſpect to the Tables, but out of fear of being

"damn'd to everlaſting fame."

From the whole tenor of Pliny's character, and it is this way we ſhould judge of men, he inveighs againſt Regulus from a virtuous rage, rather than from

from hatred, malice, or any uncharitableneſs. This puts me in mind of a ſentiment of your's, upon ſome ſuch occaſion as this, which may not be improperly repeated here: It is upon the ſubject of revenge; * "As a paſſion, it is a vice; but, as a "principle, a virtue." Purſued with malice and ill-nature, upon ſlight or common provocations, it is a paſſion inſtigated by the devil; but great and real injuries, proceeding from extreme vice and immorality, call aloud for juſtice, and then vengeance becomes a godlike principle. Perhaps it would be a proper criticiſm here, to diſtinguiſh between the words *revenge* and *avenge*.

In the latter part of the comment upon the fourth epiſtle, there is a very juſt obſervation, That it is abſolutely neceſſary for us to be as wary in the choice of our amuſements, as of our ſtudies: For which reaſon, I have often thought, that there wanted extremely ſuch an office to be eſtabliſhed in all ſtates, as a general reveller; who ſhould preſcribe and preſide over the amuſements, pleaſures, and diverſions of all ranks, all profeſſions, and all ages of men, even from their childiſh years; which would be an inſtitution of admirable ſervice to the world.

Read the whole nineteenth epiſtle, and the comment upon it. I fancy there are ſome paſſages in both, which will ſtrike and pleaſe my dear Fanny; and, in order to leave the impreſſion on your mind, I ſhall put an end to this letter, with the addition only of an alluſion to one of Prior's poems,

"So thinking on thy charming youth, &c."

HENRY.

* Letter XLVIII. laſt paragraph.

LETTER CLXXIV.

HENRY to FRANCES.

I SUPPOSE, by my not hearing from you laſt poſt, that you do not get my letters regularly; which, I hope, is owing to your being retired to the rock, though you have, at preſent, extreme bad weather for bathing. I have a melancholy proſpect before me for my wheat harveſt, and I have the greateſt quantity, and the beſt in this country; moſt of which is lodged by the rain, and ſhedding by the wind. Mais vive la philoſophie!

I hope to have a letter from you to day; but cannot get it, before this goes to the poſt: ſo I ſhall go on with my Pliny, which I never read, but when I am to write to you; and, as I undertook this work merely for your amuſement, ſo I find it now, for that reaſon, if I had no other, the pleaſanteſt manner of reading: It is certainly the moſt improving method too; and, if I had a great fortune, I would allow a good ſalary to a librarian, who ſhould antecede my ſtudy, and mark out to me only thoſe paſſages, which were remarkable or ingenious, improving or entertaining; as I would give my new ſhoes to a ſervant to wear firſt. The perſon, I would employ for this purpoſe, ſhould rather be one of a refined taſte than of deep learning, and of more natural underſtanding than great acquired knowledge. In ſhort, my deareſt Fanny, you ſhould be my Minerva, my preceptor; for even from your fragments I might hope to grow rich in wiſdom, and to be poliſhed into virtue. This laſt expreſſion has made a ſentiment occur to me, that there is a certain refined taſte, (parſons may call it grace, if they will) which, unleſs born with a man, the beſt diſpoſed Chriſtian will be but

but an heavy, unformed lump of morality. What is that reverence for the antients, that humane love for our cotemporaries, that generous benevolence for poſterity, that tender ſenſe for another's ſorrow, that high reliſh for a ſtranger's happineſs, and, laſtly, that noble, philoſophic, heart-thrilling, and religious ardor, which poſſeſſes the whole ſoul with enthuſiaſtic rapture, upon the contemplation of the aſtoniſhing greatneſs of the works of Providence, and the infinite goodneſs of their incomprehenſible Author? What are all theſe refined pleaſures owing to, I ſay, but to a natural taſte and quick reliſh for virtue; to a certain gifted capacity, large enough to comprehend the whole intellectual univerſe; that is, all mankind, paſt, preſent, and to come; and reaches ſo high, as to embrace even God himſelf; all which, a plain, good man has no more idea of, than we can of the pleaſures of a ſixth ſenſe. Addiſon has ſomewhat the ſame turn of thought with regard to piety, when he ſays, "that ſome people want parts to be "devout, and could as well make an epic poem, "as a fervent prayer."

But to return to Pliny, who is properly enough introduced after ſuch a ſubject, as carried me beyond myſelf juſt now.

The twenty-firſt epiſtle of the fourth book is an extreme pretty one. I wept for the Helvidiæ, not ſo much for their death, as for Pliny's grief at it.

In the next epiſtle there is a poetical witticiſm in the alluſion of the arrow; which is, I think, the firſt inſtance of that kind I have met with in this author.

I am charmed with the whole twenty-third epiſtle. That truly noble and philoſophic exclamation, wiſhing for that ſtage of life, when he might live to himſelf, tranſports me. There is nothing,

nothing, for which I deſpiſe a perſon ſo much, as the paltry wiſh to be younger; a childiſh longing for a bib and bells again! He muſt have ſpent his life very ill, or mean to do ſo, who would deſire to return back to any æra of it; for we are, at any ſtage, capable of virtue

In the twenty-eighth epiſtle, Pliny has miſtaken the matter, with regard to painting; for I think, it is a much eaſier matter to copy a picture, than to draw from the life.

In the laſt epiſtle of this fourth book, he mentions a ſpring, which ebbed and flowed. There is a * well ſome miles from this, which is reported to do the ſame. I never examined into it, but ſhall ride over there ſome day, on purpoſe.

I am ſurprized, that any perſon of common ſenſe could miſtake the legacy, which he was ſo pleaſed with, Epiſtle I. Book V. for that from Curianus was the only one, which did him honour. He ſays, "A ſmall legacy is fallen to me;" which ſhews, he was telling his friend ſomething new: and the former legacy was above two years before, at leaſt; for he ſays, that the ſuit, with the coheirs, was of ſo long ſtanding. The miſtake of the commentator's could never have happened, but from the mere force of prejudice; which has amazing powers, in many higher inſtances. Pliny firſt ſpeaks of Pomponia's favour, to which it was natural to apply his expreſſions of the gratefulneſs of the preſent; and, leaving the reader in this error, almoſt during the whole letter, what he ſays at laſt, though it breaks with full day upon you, could not open the eyes of prejudice.

In the fourth epiſtle you may ſee the extravagant fees, which were given to lawyers, in Pliny's time. This may make us a little better reconciled

* At Newtown.

to the extortion in our own days: though, to view this matter in the light of political morality, the preſent exorbitancy ought to alarm us extremely; for, the higher law or juſtice is vended, the ſcarcer it muſt be; and the poor, who need it moſt, will, conſequently, have leaſt of it. Then oppreſſion reigns, and liberty is no more; and then is a ſtate in the proper criſis for a revolution, either by rebellion at home, or invaſion from abroad. At the time Pliny hints at this extravagance, the great Roman Empire was haſtening to its ruin.

Adieu!

HENRY.

HIATUS.

LETTER CLXXV.

My deareſt FANNY, *Muſæum.*

OUR aſſizes are over, and I am returned to myſelf, that is, to you. I wait not for the pleaſure of hearing from you, but amuſe myſelf, in the mean time, with the more imperfect one of writing to you. I am now retired among my books, the beſt part of which library I eſteem your letters; for they not only teach me wiſdom, but promiſe me that glorious end, of which wiſdom is the ſureſt means, happineſs.

I have read ſome pages this morning in the ſecond volume of Orrery's Pliny; but ſhould not, at this time, think of entertaining you out of this author, if I had not from thence a fair opportunity of addreſſing myſelf more particularly to my heart's only aim.

You may remember, that you rallied me upon not taking notice of Pliny's epiſtles to Calpurnia, in my former remarks; but I defended myſelf, upon

upon there not being any in the firſt volume. The fourth of the ſixth book, which is the firſt of the ſecond volume, is the firſt of theſe epiſtles. I confeſs myſelf charmed with it; and am the more particularly fond of her, as, from the hint of her conſtitution and make, ſhe ſeems to reſemble you; as you, in return, do her in this; that I think you would deſerve, on the like occaſion, a letter full of the ſame fondneſs, and tenderneſs, and conjugal regard. Whenever I raiſe a ſtatue to Pliny, I will have that whole epiſtle inſcribed on the pedeſtal.

The two firſt lines of the fortieth page contain a very fine and a juſt ſentiment. From the ſecond paragraph of the comment upon this ſixteenth epiſtle, you may draw a compariſon between Pliny and Shakeſpeare, by obſerving, that the little jingle, and affected turns, in both their writings, were rather the falſe taſte of their age, than the vices of the authors.

The reflection in the ſeventeenth epiſtle, that * "he, who envies another, muſt be his inferior," is fine.

At the end of the notes upon the fourth epiſtle of the ſeventh book, Lord Orrery wiſhes that this letter had periſhed; I ſuppoſe, becauſe it betrays a little vanity about his trifling performances in poetry. He is very often angry at him, when he ſhews a weakneſs of any kind; becauſe it is natural for us to wiſh thoſe, we love or eſteem for ſome qualities, perfect in all. Now I am not quite ſo ſevere in this matter: "Non ego paucis offendor "maculis." Human nature has many foibles; and, when I perceive ſome in a great character, I ſuppoſe I ſee the whole man; but, when a perfect

* Si non inviderès major es: Nam qui invidet minor eſt. Incert. Auth.

ſyſtem

ſyſtem is preſented to me, I ſuſpect the genuineneſs of the whole; for, as I conclude a part is acted ſomewhere, I think it poſſible it may be done throughout: Which gives me occaſion to remark upon the only foible, I ever could object to my own Calpurnia; and which, like the caprices of beauty, may be compared to ſhrubs, that ſometimes occur in laying out an improvement; which though out of rule to plant there, would be want of taſte to root out.

The firſt paragraph of the fifteenth epiſtle gives me an opportunity of renewing my remark upon one of the epiſtles of the firſt volume: † I forget which of them; and, as I have returned you that book, I cannot ſet myſelf right now; but it is where he comes very near preferring a life of retired leiſure to public buſineſs; but dares not ſpeak quite out, for the reaſons there mentioned. In the paſſage of this letter, which I am now quoting, he ſays, "I dare not ſay my life would be better, "but certainly it would be happier, if my ſtudies "were my ſole employments."

I think, Lord Orrery has miſtaken that paſſage in the eighteenth epiſtle, where Pliny ſays, "The "land itſelf will never want a proprietor;" for Pliny ſeems to conſider this farm with a view of ſetting it, not of ſelling; and therefore rather wants a tenant, than a purchaſer. The original expreſſion ‡, "à quo *exerceatur*," ſeems to warrant this ſenſe.

On the nineteenth epiſtle, Faulkner makes a remarkable blunder in the comment, about the genealogy of Fannia; but, indeed, the whole edition of this book is very faulty.

† See Letter CLXII.

‡ *By whom the land is occupied:* which diſtinguiſhes a tenant from the owner of the ſoil.

In the obſervations upon the twenty-fifth epiſtle, my Lord quotes, as a proverb, this ſentence: "He, that is not for me, is againſt me;" by which he ſeems not to recollect, that it is a paſſage in Scripture, and ſpoken by our Saviour *. I am ſure, if he had been aware of this, he would not have introduced it ſo lightly here.

Adieu!

LETTER CLXXVI.

I AM infinitely obliged to my deareſt life, for the kindneſs and conſtancy of his letters: They have, indeed, almoſt made me amends for the pangs of abſence. I know nothing elſe that could have ſoothed, or even amuſed my mind, but thoſe dear pledges of your love. I confeſs I never felt ſuch ſevere anguiſh in my life, as at our laſt parting; and, though you appeared ſo then, I do not now believe you was indifferent. A thouſand circumſtances concurred to render it more painful to me, than any of our former ſeparations. You have kindly obviated the moſt material; and I ſhall now endeavour to forget the paſt, and only look forward with the pleaſing hope of our meeting.

The gentleneſs with which you treat my greateſt fault, will, I flatter myſelf, have a better effect, than the ſevereſt reproof. Allow me, my deareſt Harry, to ſay, without a boaſt, my nature is honeſt, generous, and open. I was brought up with, perhaps, too much tenderneſs and lenity: Unuſed to harſhneſs, I cannot eaſily bring myſelf to bear it from one I paſſionately love:—But be

* Luke ii. 23.

aſſured

aſſured I will endeavour to root this weed, not ſhrub, intirely out of your little parterre.

I wiſh I was as well able to vye with the merits of Calpurnia's character, as your epiſtles, for nobleneſs of ſentiment, juſtneſs of thought, elegance, and tenderneſs of expreſſion, may with Pliny's; but, alas! I fear I fall as far ſhort of her, as you, in my opinion, ſurpaſs him. In one reſpect, however, I am ſure I ſhall equal, if not exceed her; in my unbounded love, and faithful friendſhip for thee, thou deareſt, moſt amiable, and deſerving of thy ſex!

I hope, when I write next, I ſhall be more at peace; for I am not ſettled yet. In the mean time, I beg you will excuſe the wildneſs and incoherence of this ſcrawl, and believe me, with the tendereſt affection and ſincereſt eſteem, your fond and faithful

FANNY.

LETTER CLXXVII.

Dear FANNY,

I RECEIVED no letter from you by Tueſday night's poſt, ſo ſuppoſe there was not any certainty, or alteration in your affairs, at that time, worth recording. I have ſent to town, expecting a letter by Thurſday's poſt, and am very ſure I ſhall not be diſappointed. I hope the letter itſelf may not diſappoint me.

Since I received Lady ——'s laſt letter, I have had frequent ſtruggles with myſelf about anſwering it. If I do not anſwer it, I ſuffer the correſpondence to drop on my ſide; which is unpolite: If I do anſwer, I may ſeem to preſume too much upon an occaſional adventure, and thereby be deemed unworthy of the honour proceeding from it.

it. Upon the whole, I have determined in the negative, and ſacrificed my inclinations to my prudence, upon this reaſoning; that few men can deſerve ſuch high honour, by their merits; but almoſt any man may appear not unworthy of it, by his modeſty. One particular thing, which tempted me to write, was, the occurring of ſome farther thoughts upon that comfortable ſubject of the mercy of God; which was part of my letter to her; and which I did not carry as far as I might, with a little reflection, at that time, leſt it ſhould look like a premeditated eſſay, what was, in reality, but an occaſional occurrence; though, after what manner hinted to me, from any part of my letter, I cannot, at preſent, recollect.

The only objection which divines make to the unbounded mercy of God, is his infinite juſtice; for, ſay they, Juſtice is concerned about puniſhing the wicked, as well as rewarding the virtuous: and the only ſcope they will allow to mercy, is remiſſion upon repentance.

Now let us conſider the matter impartially, among ourſelves; for obſerve, there is nobody by, but you and I.

In the firſt place, it is high preſumption to pretend to reaſon about the attributes of God; and all definitions of this kind may be conſidered "like "the eye in proſpect, whoſe ſtrength can find no "end; but weakneſs makes one." The qualities and faculties of the human mind, from whence they vainly argue, may have (and it is more than probable) ſo little relation to the divine mind, that there may not be even any analogy between them; and may, perhaps, to a ſpirit capable of conceiving both, be as different ideas, as ſound and colour.

But let us diſpute with them, upon their own terms, and ſpeak of God as man; and let us agree, for

for the ſake of argument, that, though the qualities of a human creature certainly bear no proportion to the attributes, they may, however, have ſuch a relation to them as time has to eternity; and thus we may come to a clear method of reaſoning upon this ſubject.

Human juſtice then, as blended with human paſſions and human policies, may be defined a retribution of rewards and puniſhments; but, to conſider it in the abſtract, I do not think that even human juſtice comprehends the latter part of this definition; for puniſhments are inflicted either to revenge or to deter. Now, with regard to the firſt, a legiſlature is diſpaſſionate; and, with regard to the latter, I am ſure, that if a man could commit any crime, which it was impoſſible for him, or any body elſe ever to commit again, it would be a cruelty to allot any penalty for it; becauſe, in this caſe, the benefit of the example could never operate. In this ſtate, then, I look upon our ſouls in the next world; as having committed offences, which we can no longer repeat, and the puniſhment of which can then no more avail us, or ſerve as a wholeſome example, to deter others; nor is God a man, that he ſhould be angry.

I ſhall not add any thing farther upon this head, but juſt to obſerve to you, that the definition of mercy, as it is given in the beginning of this diſcourſe, abſolutely annihilates the virtue, by making it only part of another; for forgiveneſs, upon repentance, is not a diſtinct operation, according to that ſenſe; but merely a piece of juſtice. If I forgive my debtor, he is obliged to my generoſity: but, if he pays the debt, he releaſes himſelf; and I but perform common equity, by giving up his obligation, upon conditions performed.

Adieu!

HENRY.

LETTER CLXXVIII.

FRANCES to HENRY.

THE unſettled, and, of courſe, uncomfortable ſituation I have been in, theſe three months, makes me feel a very ſincere ſatisfaction at being able to date this letter from my own apartment, or, rather, your's; for I cannot, will not call it mine, 'till you have bleſt it with your preſence. Haſte, then, my deareſt life, my kindeſt love, my all, my being, haſte, and reſtore your Fanny to the enjoyment of herſelf in you! bring to her wiſhes, to her tranſports bring, all that can make mortality endured, and render immortality ſtill more deſirable!

The impatience of my fond deſire to ſee you, has hurried my imagination into a kind of rhapſody; but I own I ſhould think it a crime to love you after the common, ſober, inſipid manner; and, if exceſs of love be pardonable in any woman, I may ſtand excuſed. My conſtitution is naturally cold; nor could it be warmed into love by an object leſs worthy, than my heart's dear Harry. This declaration, which is, indeed, a true one, may well ſecure you from any fear of change in my heart: I wiſh, both for your ſake and my own, that I had merits ſufficient to furniſh me with the ſame ſecurity. But, as your love and conſtancy outweigh even your other merits to me, I will reſt ſatisfied, from my dependence on them, though conſcious of my want of worth to deſerve them, in any other way, but by returning them an hundredfold.

I cannot help ſaying, I am ſorry the correſpondence, between Lady —— and you, is at an end; though, I am certain, you judged it right.

Though we can have no perfect knowledge of the attributes of God, I cannot think it preſumption to form an idea, according to our finite capacity, that he is juſt and merciful. If we believe the Bible to be a work of inſpiration, we muſt aſſent to this opinion. If we conſider it as the work of mere man, unaſſiſted, uninſpired, it appears, that the reſult of natural reaſon, as far as finite can comprehend infinite, has given us an idea both of the Almighty and his attributes; and ſure it cannot be criminal to employ that reaſon, which he hath beſtowed upon us, in contemplation of his excellence. The fault, which I think the generality of men, and particularly divines, run into, is not the reaſoning on the divine attributes, but daring to ſet bounds to what their poor finite capacities cannot comprehend. —— I cannot, by any means, agree with you, that it is probable there ſhould be no analogy between the divine and human mind. We believe God to be all-wiſe, all-good. We muſt change the idea of theſe attributes into folly and cruelty, if we ſuppoſe he did not form the faculties of our ſouls by the moſt perfect model—by himſelf; though he confined their operation within a narrower ſphere. But when we ſhall put off this frail mortality, that now clogs and incloſes the faculties of our ſouls, I do believe they will be enlarged; and of what uſe could they be, had they no analogy to the divine Being; in the contemplation of whoſe endleſs glory and perfection our chief happineſs will, I preſume, conſiſt?

I am quite charmed with your argument for unbounded mercy. I think it is carried as far as finite wiſdom can go; and, to make uſe of your own expreſſion *, has ſhewn, that "God is not "made up of parts, but is one perfect being,"

* In ſome other place.

whoſe

whoſe attributes co-operate and correſpond together.

In compliance with your oft-repeated deſire, you ſee I have ventured to touch upon a ſubject infinitely beyond my capacity; but it is in ſuch a manner, as boys firſt learn to ſwim; conſcious I am out of my depth, and afraid of drowning every inſtant: But my dear teacher will, I am ſure, reach out his hand to ſave his little trembling pupil.

Adieu!

FRANCES.

LETTER CLXXIX.

My deareſt FANNY, *Muſæum.*

TO-MORROW is to be a very buſy day with me, both at home and abroad; therefore I ſhall dedicate this pleaſant, tranquil Sunday evening to you, leſt I ſhould miſs a poſt. I am in haſte too, to finiſh Pliny, that I may ſend it up along with the reſt of your books.

In a note upon the twenty ſeventh epiſtle of the ſeventh book, we are informed of the name of that philoſopher, who gave the famous advice to Auguſtus, to repeat the twenty four letters, whenever he found his paſſion riſing. I wiſh I had ſeen this paſſage before the laſt evening we ſpent at ———. The advice, indeed, I have often heard of; but never knew the author's name before, or I ſhould have honoured it. I have very ſeldom known the charm put in practice; but always imagined, when I ſaw a man in a paſſion, that either he had never heard of it, or had never learnt his alphabet: Upon which hint, I am tempted ſometimes to treat ſuch perſons like children, and hang a horn-book about their necks, ſaying, with Brutus,

" I will

" I will uſe thee for my ſport, yea, for my
" laughter, when thou grow'ſt waſpiſh."

The cure for a ſcold, a poem in one of the Tatlers, is from ſuch a hint, as this of Athenodorus.

In the obſervations upon this ſame epiſtle, Lord Orrery inveighs againſt the weakneſs and credulity, with regard to ghoſts and apparitions. Now I cannot join with him in this particular; becauſe there are ſome ſtories of this kind, ſo well atteſted, that they ſhould gain credit, like other parts of hiſtory, upon the ſame authority. The belief of this matter is a thing above our reaſon, but not contrary to it; which is the proper definition of faith: And if it were made an article of our creed, I do not think it would be amiſs; for it is not contrary to religion, as being vouched by holy writ: At leaſt, I would not diſcourage the belief, ſince it is a ſtrong proof of life, after death; and which every argument that tends to prove, adds ſtrength to religion and virtue *. As to the immortality of the ſoul, which I lay hold of every opportunity to diſcourſe upon, it is a thing, which a chriſtian cannot doubt of; becauſe there is expreſs authority for it in that book, upon which his faith is founded: And even to a Deiſt it may be proved, ex abſurdo; which is a method of arguing in the mathematics, when the truth of a propoſition cannot be demonſtrated in a direct manner, the aſſent is gained, by ſhewing the abſurdity of the contrary opinion: As thus; if there be no hereafter for mankind, God is inconſiſtent, and unjuſt; the firſt, in giving us hopes (which we certainly have from the light of nature alone) that are never to be

* Scito te mortalem non eſſe, ſed corpus hoc: Nec enim is es quem forma iſta declarat; ſed mens cujuſque is eſt quiſque. Cic.

fulfilled; and the ſecond, in ſuffering virtue in any ſhape, to go unrewarded. That being, then, which is inconſiſtent, or unjuſt, cannot be God; ergo, a mortaliſt Deiſt ſinks into an Atheiſt. I would treat an Atheiſt after the ſame manner that I mentioned juſt now, and brand him with that pupil enſign, which is the proper emblem of his extreme ignorance; for as the Pſalmiſt juſtly expreſſes it.

"The fool hath ſaid in his heart, there is no "God."

Orrery, in the notes upon the twenty-eight epiſtle, ſays, this letter ſhould be placed the firſt of the whole collection; and he is certainly right: Proper lights, and particular points of view, are a great advantage to every thing. He often complains of the want of order through the whole; and I am angry at him, for not ſetting this matter right; for it would be as little trouble, as the obſerving upon it. I have a mind to do ſo myſelf, when I have finiſhed the reading.

I am pleaſed with Pliny's ſentiment upon ridicule, in the laſt paragraph of the twenty-ninth epiſtle: And I approve of it as an admirable weapon againſt vice; and ſurely fitter here employed, than, as Shaftſbury recommends it, for the teſt of truth. Almoſt any man would undergo fine, impriſonment, or pain itſelf, rather than the mortification of being laughed at. Addiſon, and other ingenious writers, have ſpoken ſo admirably upon the power of ſhame, or influence of modeſty, that, for very ſhame, I ſhall not attempt to purſue the ſubject in this light; but ſhall take the liberty, for the honour of human nature, to conſider this matter in a particular manner, which I never met with in any author.

Speech

Speech is not the diſtinguiſhing ſign of an human creature; for birds have been taught to ſpeak: Nay, all the brute, or animal creation converſe naturally; for their tones are intelligible to each other; and what are words, but ſounds, and expreſſions of our ideas? Rationality is not the proper ſign neither; for inſtinct makes that matter doubtful; and it is certain, that all animals act logically. Riſibility is a mark much inſiſted upon; but, if this is meant merely of a diſtortion of countenance, I have ſeen dogs laugh; and if it be meant as a ſign of chearfulneſs, or pleaſure, then the various expreſſions of theſe ſenſations, throughout the whole brute world, ſufficiently anſwer to this definition. I look upon modeſty, then, to be the only characteriſtic, or criterion, which properly diſtinguiſhes man from other animals; as we are certainly the only creatures known who have the leaſt ſenſe of ſhame *.

I am, my fair inſpirer,

Your oracle,

HENRY.

* It gives me a ſingular pleaſure to find that Butler had the ſame thought before me, for in his Remains, which were firſt publiſhed, long ſince the former edition of theſe letters, there is this paſſage. "Shame is as "much the propriety of human nature, though over-"ſeen by the philoſophers, and perhaps more than rea-"ſon, laughing, or looking aſquint, by which they diſ-"tinguiſh men from beaſts; and the leſs men have of it, "the nearer they approach to the nature of brutes." Chap. on Impudence.

LETTER CLXXX.

HENRY to FRANCES.

I SENT a ſecond meſſenger to the poſt, ſuſpecting the firſt had deceived me; but not a line from you, though you muſt know how anxious I am, at preſent, to learn ſome particulars relating to your ſituation. Well! I am angry now—but A, B, C, &c. and now kiſs, and friends; and you are my own ſpoiled pet again: But, if I do not hear from you by tomorrow, I muſt eke out the Roman alphabet with the Greek and Hebrew. I ſent to know, if Kitty had any account of you, but received no ſatisfaction from thence.

But to return to Pliny: I think Orrery too ſevere upon the ſecond epiſtle of the eighth book, not conſidering it as wrote to a friend, and not to the world. The privilege of friendſhip is, to think aloud: And ſhall I be reprimanded for communicating to my deareſt Fanny my humane ſentiments, with regard to the * gleaner's harveſt, &c.? Or, ſhall I be thonght ridiculous for telling you, that I have ſpent good part of this morning in the amuſement of a Roman Emperor, catching flies? not like Domitian, to kill them; but to retrieve them from their torpid ſtate by the heat of my hand, and have the joy to ſee them flutter about the room, with added life and vigour. I think it a wrong thing, to diſcourage, in any ſort, the exerciſe of humanity, even the talking of it; as by this means, perhaps, ſome people may be, as it were, intrapped into virtue †; by profeſſing it firſt out of

* Letter CLXVII.

† Jam non conſilio bonus, ſed more eo perductus, ut non tantum recte facere poſſim, ſed niſi recte facere non poſſim. Cic.

vanity,

vanity, they may come afterwards to practiſe it out of ſhame. Many a coward has been induced to fight, becauſe he has happened to boaſt that he would.

In the twenty-ſecond epiſtle, there is a very juſt ſentiment, and a very proper one to be conſidered by the ſevere moraliſt, or the *outrageouſly virtuous*: "He who hates faults, hates mankind."

The twenty-third epiſtle is a very affecting one, and the character of Junius Avitus is very amiable. It is, indeed, the nature of the afflicted to enumerate every little circumſtance, which once gave us pleaſure in the enjoyment of what we have loſt; and it is ſometimes a mortifying reflection, that, while we are multiplying our joys, we may, perhaps, be but increaſing the earneſt of our griefs.

In the ſeventh letter of the ninth book, and ſeveral precedent ones, I find the reaſon for Lord Orrery's eſſay upon antient architecture, which you may remember, I was a little alarmed about in his preface to this work; for which I here offer my palinode.

In the eighth Epiſtle, there is an inſtance of wit in the comment: "Vanity, like ſmoke, "ſmothers and obſcures the flame, from whence "it proceeds." I have obſerved a great deal of lively fancy, as well as juſt thought, in my Lord's writing, through the courſe of this work: And, upon the whole, I think he has ſhewn himſelf a man of virtue, a man of learning, and a man of taſte; and if he was not alſo a man of rank and fortune, which might make my attachment ſuſpected by perſons, who have none of the qualities above-mentioned to ennoble their ſentiments, I would certainly take ſome ſolicitous pains to become acquainted with him.

In the laſt paragraph of the preface to the tenth book, my Lord ſeems in doubt about the render-

ing the word, Dominus; which he has done very juſtly, by tranſlating it, Sir; as it is addreſſed by Pliny to Trajan. It is in this manner we ſpeak to our Kings; and the French, who are patterns of all politeneſs and decorum, ſalute their Grand Monarque by the ſtile of Sire.

The twenty-eighth Epiſtle of the tenth book ſhould immediately precede the thirtieth; becauſe, in this laſt, he refers to the former, in theſe words: "I had informed you, by my laſt letter, that "Lycormas, &c." I take eſpecial notice of the want of order in this particular, becauſe my Lord has attempted to place all the letters of this tenth and laſt book, in a regular ſeries; and, upon this occaſion, I ſhall repeat what I ſaid in a former letter, Why did he not take the ſame pains throughout?

In his thirtieth epiſtle, Pliny gives an abſurd reaſon for not detaining the Ambaſſador: He ſays, it was becauſe Lycormas had deſired he ſhould be detained, 'till he himſelf arrived.

The thirty-fifth and thirty ninth epiſtles from Trajan, are exact models of all the court anſwers to public addreſſes.

Adieu, my life! and believe me, 'till to-morrow's poſt,

Your's,

ATHENODORUS.

LETTER CLXXXI.

MY dear little ſhrub, my arbutus, my evergreen, I wiſh you joy of your retirement, and happy vocation from * * *

I am really charmed with your reaſoning, upon the analogy between the finite perfections and the divine attributes, ſo juſtly deduced from the wiſdom and goodneſs of Providence; and am pleaſed, that I carried my ſentiments no farther upon that ſubject, than merely to ſuggeſt, that, perhaps, there might be no relation between them: For, when I come cloſe to the argument with the divines, I enter the liſts upon their own terms; but I only fix the feet of Jacob's ladder on the earth, while your ſoar upon it to the ſkies.

I meant to conſider mercy, as a ſelf-ſufficient, diſtinct, operating excellence in the godhead; the proper objects of which were thoſe, who did not come within the merits of that repentance, which might intitle them to the juſtice defined in that letter. I am, my deareſt Fanny, well aware, how little orthodox I am in this opinion; and therefore call upon myſelf for ſome explanation on this ſubject, as I ſeem to make no difference between the good and bad, with regard to the unbounded mercy of God. In order to which, I ſhall make uſe of an alluſion, by conſidering man in his life, like a ſilk-worm in its nymph-ſtate, involved and incompaſſed round with toils of their own weaving; the one waiting 'till God's bleſſing, as the other for a warm ſun, ſhall reſcue him to a joyful reſurrection. Now ſome inſects carry the ſeeds of death with them into the grave, and, conſequently, periſh immediately, without being able to revive to a new life: in which forlorn ſituation I conſider a wicked man—and think I have ſome authority from Scripture for this hypotheſis.

* "The wages of ſin are *death*; but the gift "of the Lord is *eternal life*."

* Romans, ch. 6. v. 23.

And again,

" The Lord wiſheth not the *death* of a ſinner, " but rather, that he may turn from his wicked- " neſs, and *live*."

Now, though the inflicting of puniſhments, as I have ſomewhere ſaid, would, in ſome ſort, deprive heaven of the full enjoyment of its own perfection; yet ſuch a literal death, as I underſtand from theſe texts, that is, the intire deprivation of ſenſe or being from a ſinner, is not only agreeable to juſtice, but to mercy too; for " they ſay, bad " men would be unbleſſed in heaven:" And as this life is given us, in order to prepare our ſouls for the reliſh of that contemplative bliſs which is hereafter to be permitted to the ſpirits of good men made perfect, it would be rather an inſtance of cruelty, than mercy, to grant immortality to thoſe unhappy wretches, in a ſtate of exiſtence, which would not admit the gratifications of mortal ſenſes, or the indulgence of human paſſions †.

As I am drawing toward the concluſion of Pliny's works, I ſhall finiſh my remarks upon him, and his tranſlator, in the remainder of this letter.

In a note upon the forty-ſixth Epiſtle, *optimo viro* is called an idiom, but I cannot ſee for what reaſon: And my Lord might very well have rendered it literally, *the beſt of men*, without appearing the leaſt ſtiff in the ſtile of that expreſſion, as he apprehends.

Trajan's ſpeech, in the laſt part of the comment upon the fifty-firſt Epiſtle, puts me in mind of a humour of the widow Jacob, in this country;

† It was the opinion of the Stoic philoſophy, that only the ſouls of good men ſubſiſted after death; that the bad, periſhed totally, body and ſoul together, like a brute.

who

who was ſome time ago married, and the morning after, ſhe appeared capariſoned with an horſe-whip pinned to her girdle; and told her huſband, ſhe meant always to wear it about her, that it might be ready, whenever ſhe deſerved his chaſtiſement.

In the ſixty-ſeventh Epiſtle, read *ſince*, for *ſcarce*.

I have gone through the reſt of this book, which finiſhes the volume, and find nothing more fit to be remarked upon, that is not already taken notice of by the commentator, much better than I can pretend to do; and this in general, is the reaſon, why I have made ſo few obſervations upon the whole work. As to the freedom I have taken, in ſome criticiſms, both with the author, and his commentator, I ſhall excuſe myſelf with a quotation out of the thirteenth Epiſtle of the third book: "If I find you ſo frank, as to make objections to "particular paſſages, I ſhall take it for granted, "that you are pleaſed with all the reſt." And ſo indeed I am.

I think, the twentieth Epiſtle of the fourth book, would be proper to conclude theſe remarks with; changing the word *grief* for *ſenſe*, and applying that letter to Pliny and Orrery.

And now let me aſſure you, my dear Fanny, that I feel a real concern, upon the cloſe of this work, at parting with three ſuch men, as Trajan, Pliny, and Orrery: But one I hope to know in this life, and ſhall die in truſt of meeting the others in the next; and you, my beſt-loved girl, ſhall know them too:

"Together to the realms of bliſs we'll go."

'Till then, let us live, and love; for, while we do one, I am ſure we ſhall do the other.

Adieu, my heart's delight!

HENRY.

LETTER CLXXXII.

My deareſt HARRY,

I AM vaſtly provoked at your not receiving my letters regularly: I am uneaſy about my Saturday's letter, though the diſappointment only, could make it of any conſequence. As I have nothing extraordinary to ſay, at preſent, with regard to myſelf, and have not time to anſwer your's, I ſhould not write to-night, but on account of the incloſed, which, I am ſure, will give you pleaſure, as my dear Lady ——'s ſentiments correſpond with your's. I have wrote a very long letter to her; and my fingers ach to ſuch a degree, I can hardly hold the pen. I hope, I have now returned the compliment you paid me, by bringing her letter to ——.

We will preſcribe the whole alphabet, only to very weak or very iraſcible people; for I think, the five vowels might ſerve to ſurmount any reſentment, we could have to each other: However, if you like the * water-bottle beſt, I will always have one by my ſide.

Adieu, my love!

LETTER CLXXXIII.

My FANNY,

I RECEIVED your's, with Lady ——'s incloſed; and am pleaſed to find, ſhe does not ſpeak, like a courtier, to your pride, but addreſſes herſelf, like a philoſopher and a friend, to your prudence. It is certain, that no man partakes of

* Alluding to a poem in the Tatler, a cure for a ſcold.

the lowneſs of his ſituation, while he appears above it: And the queſtion in life is, not what part we acted, but how we performed it. What ſhe ſays, is extremely juſt, " † that misfortunes " ſhould be rather a ſpur, than a bridle, to us;" as a man exerts himſelf more in a bog, than upon terra firma; and the noble mind, like a tennis ball, always riſes in proportion to its fall. Cæſar ſaid bravely, that he would rather be the firſt man in a village, than the ſecond at Rome; and I would rather appear above a low part, than beneath a great one.

I am glad to find, that you have contracted the maxim of Athenodorus to the vowels; though, by mentioning the *water-bottle*, I ſuſpect you mean to add the *liquids* to them. Now I will cut the work ſtill ſhorter; for I will confine myſelf, not only to the vowels, but to two of them, in honour of ourſelves: For I think, upon any ſuch occaſion, we need have regard but to U and I; and, to ſhorten it ſtill further, let us conſider thoſe two letters but as a diphthong.

I have been employed theſe three mornings in two of the moſt oppoſite amuſements, that one can well imagine; in ſorting and reading all your charming letters, filled with kindneſs, love and truth, and pulling the grey hairs out of my head —Not, as one might conjecture, to leave myſelf yet the appearance of youth, ſufficient to juſtify ſo much fondneſs, but for a very extraordinary reaſon; to preſent my lively, gay, young love with a locket of them. You have ſeveral times wiſhed, that I was many years older than I am; in return for which, I ſhall dedicate every ſymptom of age to you ſtill, as they appear.

† *D. reſſurgo*; the motto of the palm tree.

* " My fiddle, as my nerves unſtrung,
" Venus, upon thy ſhrine be hung!
" Cupid, ſound a retreat."

Now we are upon the ſubject of age, we may talk of the epitaphs, which I promiſed to frame for you and me. The two, I have thought of, are, " *evaſi*, I have eſcaped," looking upon death in that philoſophic light; and " *permutatio felix!* " A happy exchange!" conſidering death as becomes a chriſtian, the means of an exchange for immortality. I give you your choice of them; though, as I hope, and ſhall take care, that we ſhall be both laid under one ſtone, I will have them both inſcribed, as of one ſentence, to ſhew that in death, as well as life, I conſider you part of myſelf—" And in death they were not divided." The epitaph then ſhall ſtand thus:

Evaſimus—Permutatio felix!

In the name of God, Amen!

Believe me your's,
HENRY.

* A quotation from an ode of Horace, tranſlated, and parodied by Henry.

LETTER CLXXXIV.

FRANCES to HENRY.

AS I am ſtill in the ſame diſagreeable way, with regard to my health, I would not write to my ſweet love this night, but to prevent his apprehenſion of my being worſe. There is ſomething extremely odd in my diſorder, as there is not the leaſt alteration in it. Time has, however, leſſened my feelings, but not abated my complaints. I own

I am

I am greatly alarmed at my illneſs; but I will not ſay more on a ſubject, which, I am ſure, occaſions you almoſt as much pain as me.

I will not, by any means, accept either of the epitaphs, you offer me, unleſs I ſhould ſurvive you. (What a thought was that!) Forgive me, heaven, when I ſay, thy joys, as far as my poor finite views can reach, could hardly counterpoiſe my Henry's loſs. I will not, cannot bear to part with thee. My ſpirits are much too low, to be able to get the better of this melancholy reflection; and, believe me, Harry, fully certain as I am of the mercies of my Creator, I find no pang in the thoughts of dying; nor do I think I ſhould find a ſting in death itſelf, but that of being torn from thee, my life, my ſoul, my immortality! and could I call it "an eſcape, a bleſt exchange?" ah! no: —I muſt want much of that paſſionate regard I feel for thee, ere I can think it bliſs to part from you. I'll not endure the thought.

I hope, indeed, you will take care to ſee me laid in ſome place, where death ſhall not divide our poor remains; "where thou, with frequent eyes, "my ſepulchre may'ſt ſee!" Oh! grant, thou good, thou great, all merciful, and all-glorious God, that the laſt object, which I view on earth, may be my Henry! that he may cloſe my eyes, "and ſmooth my paſſage to the realms of day!"

I gladly accept of every mark of age, which it ſhall ever be in your power to devote to me, provided they give no hints of your mortality. I own I rejoice at every pain, or ſickneſs, that I feel, which ſeems to promiſe I ſhall not be left behind; for I can much better bear the thoughts of quitting you, than of your leaving me.

Adieu, my life! my love! believe me your's till death, and ever after.

FRANCES.

LETTER CLXXXV.

I AM almoſt angry with my ſweet love for not attributing his diſappointment to any cauſe, rather than my neglect. I did indeed write, by Saturday's poſt, to Lady ——, to Kitty, and to you. How extremely rude muſt Lady —— think me; as there is no doubt but all my letters miſcarried! I am vaſtly uneaſy about them, but particularly for her's, it being of moſt conſequence.

I join with you in thinking that friendſhip not only allows the privilege of communicating our inmoſt thoughts, and of acknowledging the honeſt pride we feel from the exerciſe of any moral virtue, but that it is a breach of that noble intercourſe to conceal even our faults or foibles. For my part, I have ſhewn my heart as naked to thy view, as to the eye of heaven. Real friendſhip, like true love, is underſtood by very few, yet common in the mouths of every one. It can only be conceived by minds capable of the moſt refined and diſintereſted ſentiments: "Reſerve will wound it, and diſtruſt "deſtroy;" and this makes "friends ſuch rari-"ties below." I think, that perſons of different ſexes, who, with a tolerable underſtanding, have had a ſincere affection for each other, are moſt likely to be capable of real friendſhip; for even the remains of love will create a gentleneſs in our manners, and complacency of behaviour; the want of which is too often the effect and bane of common friendſhips. I declare ſolemnly, I have felt a higher ſatisfaction in conſidering myſelf as your firſt friend, than ever I did in thinking myſelf the object of your affection. I know myſelf capable of retaining your eſteem, becauſe I will never do any thing to forfeit it; and therefore I receive greater pleaſure from any mark of your confidence,

than

than from the fondeſt expreſſions of your love—Not but I ſhall ever wiſh to preſerve that too, as I have paid the price for it, by giving mine; but we are, in general, fonder of what we have no right to, than what is juſtly our's.

There is no part of your character ſo much indears you to me, as the tenderneſs and humanity of your diſpoſition. I have actually felt the ſame tranſport in thinking of it, as you have done in the exerciſe; my heart has trembled, and eyes overflowed with pleaſure, as if I had done ſome generous or humane act myſelf.

I do aſſure you, that often in the extreme fondneſs of my heart, when I have looked at, and heard you with the ſincereſt delight, I have been ready to burſt into tears, from reflecting that the happineſs, I then enjoyed, might ſome time prove an aggravation of my miſery; and ſure there is no anguiſh equal to that, which ariſes from our departed joys. I do not remember I was ever ſo much affected at any thing I read, as at a paſſage of Young's, which I met with during the interregnum of our loves.

" And ſhe was mine; and I was—was moſt
" bleſs'd!
" Gay title of the deepeſt miſery!"

But I will have done with this melancholy ſubject; and I ſincerely hope it will never more occur to my remembrance.

Your brother and ſiſter have been with me all day; ſo that I muſt quit you ſooner than I would. Set down all the blots and blunders to their account; for though my thoughts are fixed on you, yet being obliged to converſe with them, makes both my hands and eyes to wander. They have been vaſtly civil to me, ſince I came to town.

I in-

I intreat you will inquire about my Saturday's letter; and believe me, my deareſt life,

Your ſincereſt, and moſt affectionate friend,

FRANCES.

A letter is wanting, which this alſo anſwers.

LETTER CLXXXVI.

HENRY to FRANCES.

Muſæum.

I AM concerned at the account of your health: You ſay you do not know what ails you; but that you are ſick, and have loſt your appetite, and ſpirits. Now take it thus, and you will find the true ſtate of your diſorder: You have loſt your ſpirits; conſequently your appetite; and then it is no wonder you are ſick. But the cauſe of this progreſſion is yet to be related; namely, the fretting, you have humoured yourſelf in, upon this late occaſion. I wiſh, my dear Fanny, I could make you as good a philoſopher in practice, as you are in theory. You have made me both; for which I am more beholden to you, than to my mother for my birth. She made me but an animal; you have made me a man.

I deſire you will ſend me Lady ——'s letter, when you have anſwered it. I am intereſted in the ſmalleſt circumſtance relating to you, and am vain of every compliment paid you.

I think there is ſomething very pretty in your ſentiments about friendſhip. You have carried the thought farther, than I had ever conſidered it, by ſaying, even our faults, or foibles, we ſhould not hide, in ſuch an intercourſe; but I think there is

is even a certain honeſty in ſuch an open dealing; for friendſhip, ſuch as deſerves that name, is an union for life; and, as in the meaner partnerſhips of trade, we ſhould reveal the drawbacks of debts, or inſufficiences upon our ſtock, how much more nice ought we to be in this noble and generous ſociety! I think, with you, that perſons of different ſexes are moſt likely to preſerve the beſt, and moſt laſting friendſhips; and really believe, that, in the very few marriage ſtates, which can be deemed happy, the moſt perfect concords of this kind are to be found. That gentleneſs of manners, and complacency of behaviour, which you mention, may be conſidered as the eſſence of virtue, rather than the mere ornament of it; and the French writers treat of them in this pretty light, under the title of "Les petites Morales." If ſtrict philoſophy will not admit of this expreſſion, they may certainly be allowed the marks of the moſt amiable virtues; as they are ſure ſigns of good-nature, humility, and humanity. As ſome of the ſages ſaid, that virtue need but put on a viſible form, to bewitch mankind with her charms, I think, that, what is meant by the term, good-breeding, muſt certainly be the dreſs, ſhe would appear in. Mere naked virtue, perhaps, may be a fit contemplation for an angel; but ſhe muſt be cloathed, with decency, to be admired by man. A bleſſed ſpirit, as it has no "ſenſe to ake," can bear the tranſcendent ſplendor of truth; but her glory is too dazzling for the human mind to bear without a veil; as we look at the ſun through a ſmoaked glaſs, and are obliged to uſe ſhades, to mark the beauties of proportion.

Upon this occaſion, has happily occurred to me, part of the moſt noble deſcription of the ſtate of the bleſſed, that can be conceived; though it was imagined, by an unenlightened heathen; Plotinus, a phi-

a philoſopher of the Platonic ſect. A tranſlation will ſerve you, as well as the original.

"In heaven, the bleſſed inhabitants enjoy a "happy tranquillity, having truth itſelf for the "author of their being, for their eſſence and ſup-"port. They ſee things there, not only as they "are produced, but contemplate them in their firſt "principles, and behold themſelves in thoſe about "them; for there, all things are obvious and "perſpicuous, nothing obſcure, nothing oppoſite: "All is conſpicuous to all, intrinſical throughout; "for light every-where blends with light: Every "one has every thing in himſelf, and beholds the "ſame in others: All things then are every-where, "and immenſe ſplendor ſhines through all: Mo-"tion there, is perfectly pure; for one motion "does not impede another: Reſt alſo there, is "never diſturbed by change; for it is not blended "with unſtable nature: There, dwells beauty in "the abſtract, independent of form, or matter. "We may further preſume, that thoſe, who be-"hold theſe things, can never be fatigued in the "contemplation of them; nor can any ſatiety oc-"cur, to occaſion any fatigue; for there will be "no emptineſs in any one, which, by being filled "and ſatiated, may put an end to their enjoy-"ment."

I have here given you the ſenſe of this beautiful paſſage; though, I am afraid, I have but poorly imitated the ſpirit of it. The whole author is extremely fine; and this is but a very ſmall part of the great deſcription, he has ſo glorioufly attempt-ed; but it was all, which fairly occurred to me upon the ſubject of this letter, and, as I thought, had ſome relation to it.

Adieu!

HENRY.

LETTER CLXXXVII.

HENRY to FRANCES.

My dearest Life,

I AM much alarmed about your disorder, and extremely concerned at it. For heaven's sake, take care of yourself. Go early to bed, though you lie awake three hours after it; and get up early, though you should be obliged to dose in the middle of the day for it. Consider, my heart's passion, my mind's reflection, my life's happiness, and my soul's hope, that all these precious concerns depend upon you, and are employed about you. If I had a more favourite scheme in view, than your felicity, or imagined to myself any transport, but through that means, you might then, perhaps, be at liberty to trifle away your time and health, upon persons who have neither sense or taste enough to conceive your merits, nor tenderness or love to be affected by them. Remember now, my warmest wish, that I trust you with yourself; and surely the high confidence of so dear a pledge deserves, at least, that it shall not be impaired in your keeping.

Since you do not approve of my epitaphs, I beg you will frame others more to your fancy; or, rather, let the actions of our lives form the mottos for our graves. It was finely said of Socrates, when called upon by his judges to make his defence, "I have been doing nothing else all my "life." Montaigne observes, very justly, upon the subject of death, "that the philosophy of "the schools but increases, by præpensity the "terrors of it; and only prepares us for the pre-"paration." What signifies all the sophistry, deduced from the consideration of the mortality of

our

our ſtate, that we had life itſelf, but upon theſe conditions, "that death, a neceſſary end, will "come when it will come?" with other quibbles of the ſame kind.——The only way to make ready for death, is to prepare our lives for it. Actions, not words, can comfort us at ſuch a criſis.

After ſo ſolemn a ſubject as this, it may appear light to mention ſuch a trifle, as I am going to ſpeak of, but that, in truth, though I expect to be laughed at, I have ſome ſcruples of conſcience about it. There is a butterfly in my ſtudy, which would be dead ſome time paſt, but that I watched it, at the end of the ſeaſon, and have frequently revived it by the warmth of my breath, every day ſince; and you cannot conceive the pleaſure I receive, when I feel it flutter in my hand, upon ſuch occaſions. By this means I have prolonged it's life beyond the date of butterflies. Now perhaps I am counteracting the order of Providence, and may deſerve the puniſhment of Prometheus, for ſtealing fire from heaven, to animate his man of clay: Perhaps too, I am but making this poor inſect linger out a life in pain; for I believe no creature, but man, ever received pleaſure from any thing which was contrary to nature. In ſhort, I begin to fancy I am guilty of ſuch a cruelty, as the keeping a man awake all night, by way of adding ſo many hours to his day. Should any phyſician diſcover an elixir, which might equal our lives to the age of Patriarchs, would he not deſerve to have his own cut ſhort, for tempting men to cheat themſelves of ſome portion of a glorious immortality, merely to lengthen out ſome years of miſery, here below? The Gymnoſophiſts have a fine ſentiment? that we are, in this life, but in a ſtate of conception; and that death is our delivery. A man then, who has lived beyond the bounds preſcribed by nature, may, perhaps, be conſidered, in the next life,

life, as a præternatural birth. For my part, I deſire not to die before the ordinary fate of human nature; but, at the ſame time, wiſh, with Horace,

"Nec turpem ſenectutem degere,"

Not to conſume a loathſome age.

Adieu, my life! remember your health, and remember me.

HENRY.

LETTER CLXXXVIII.
FRANCES to HENRY.

THE paſſage you quote from Plotinus, is indeed a fine one. I have never met with any thing, which gives ſo ſtrong, and beautiful an idea of a future ſtate. What a diſgrace to our modern philoſophers and divines, who have the light of revealed religion for their guide, to be ſo far outdone by the noble ſpirit and blaze, of unenlightened heatheniſm.

I look upon *Les petites morales* to be as abſolutely neceſſary, to make a man happy in this life, as true morality, to intitle him to, or render him capable of happineſs in the next.

There is ſomething ſo extremely elegant and tender in the firſt part of your ſecond letter, as would render life pleaſing, under the ſevereſt agonies, if, by enduring them, I might repay ſuch goodneſs. Indeed, thou deareſt, kindeſt, beſt of men, I will do all I can for the recovery and preſervation of that health, whoſe only charm to me is, being dear to you. I wiſh I could tell you I was better. I think I grow worſe every day; but I do not make the leaſt doubt of my recovery, for there is nothing dangerous in my diſorder; though I ſuffer

ſuffer more than I thought my conſtitution could poſſibly bear. I am convinced I ſhould mend, immediately, if you were with me. This may appear childiſh; but ſick folks and children are fanciful alike. Tell me then, thou dear phyſician to my ſoul and body, when wilt thou give me new life and health? I conſider myſelf in the ſame ſituation as the little butterfly you mention, inſenſible to every thing round me: or rather, like Promotheus's man of clay,

* "I ſtand unmov'd, and wait, in dull ſuſpence,
"Thy heavenly charms, to warm me into ſenſe."

I can, no more than you, determine, whether it is kind, or cruel, to prolong the life of your little favourite. What does it ſubſiſt on, during the time of its natural exiſtence? If you know, and can provide it with natural ſuſtenance, we may ſuppoſe it dies only for want of the ſun's heat; then, to revive it with an artificial warmth cannot be cruelty: But if it's food, as I believe, be of the ſummer's pride, and is not now to be found in the vegetable world, I fear the poor little inſect ſuffers by your fondneſs, as annihilation is preferable to miſery. Beſides, I fancy a butterfly does not die; but, according to the Pythagorean ſyſtem, changes its form and being. This I am not quite clear in; though I have met with ſome poetical ſimile, that warrants this opinion

To conſider our preſent ſtate of exiſtence, as rational beings, who hope for a glorious immortality, it muſt appear the higheſt act of folly to aim at lengthening it, even for a moment: it is as abſurd, as to ſuppoſe a priſoner ſhould deſire to continue in a dungeon, when he may have liberty to quit it, and enjoy all the delights of life: yet

* See Letter LXIV.

were

were there any perſon, who had been born and bred in ſuch a diſmal ſituation, that had entered into ties and connections with wretches as unhappy as himſelf, he would, I dare ſay, feel a ſtrong reluctance at entering into a happier ſtate, when he muſt part from thoſe, who had been partners in his miſery, and all the ſolace of it. So we, though Providence has wiſely ordered, that diſappointments, pain, and loſs of friends ſhould, by degrees, unlooſe the hold we take of this dim ſpot; that our loves, our friendſhips, ſhould be torn aſunder; that even our deſires and paſſions ſhould decay, and leave us ſcarce a wiſh on earth; yet ſtripped of, and abandoned by all, that makes life pleaſing; left, as it were, naked, on a barren ſhore; when we have nothing elſe to graſp at, we lay hold on our own frail and feveriſh beings, and ſeem to find a *pain*, in being ſeparated from *pain*.

There are five or ſix people talking round me. It is impoſſible for me to know what I write: but this I know, that I live but in the earneſt hope of being your's, here and hereafter.

FRANCES.

LETTER CLXXXIX.

My dear FANNY,

YOU may ſee, by my paper, that I am not at home, and conſequently have not your laſt letter with me, to anſwer; therefore you can expect no other reaſon for my writing to you now, but to ſhew you I would not neglect it, even for one poſt, though unprepared with my beſt help, your love-inſpiring, ſenſe-inditing epiſtles.

The family of ——— dined with me to-day, and hurried me home with them this evening. I would

would have excuſed myſelf, but that I avoid the appearance of any thing which looks queer; and I am apt to ſuſpect, that a perſon has but the appearance of ſenſe, courage, or philoſophy, who affects to manifeſt them upon trifling occaſions. I declare that I have of late, ſo entirely given myſelf up to the charming pleaſures of ſolitude, that I begin to endure company, as one plays a bad hand of cards, not for the enjoyment of the ſport, but merely to keep one's ſelf within the game. This turn of mind has ſometimes ſo alarmed me, that I have argued the point with myſelf, pro and con; but have declared for the pleaſure of retired and philoſophic leiſure upon this reaſoning, that it is poſſible ſome accident or misfortune of life may hereafter deprive me of the enjoyment of ſociety; for few and rare friends are found at the poor, the ſick, or the priſoner's levee; but death alone can rob me of the heart approving, rational joys of ſolitude. If I quitted the *converſe* of the world out of an auſtereneſs of manners, or a ſeverity of morals, I might juſtly appear in the uncouth and unphiloſophic light of a miſanthrope; but when I retire, in order to prepare myſelf for a *better*, I ſeem to myſelf to act the part of one, who takes a larger ſcope in view, than the ſcanty horizon of this narrow globe. I retire, to converſe with you, and to make aſſignations with thee, my charming ſeraph, where I ſhall have myriads of unjealous rivals in thy love, in the harmony of thy ſenſe and virtue. It is you alone, who can make me endure ſociety; as it was you only, who have inſpired me with thoſe helps, which can enable me to live alone. You need not be apprehenſive, that ſuch abſtracted ſpeculations as theſe, can ever abate the warmth of my affection to you; for what is my love to my deareſt Fanny, but that *taſte* for virtue, which I hinted at in a former letter, and that high admiration

tion for beauty, harmony, and order, which is the proper contemplation of the truly philoſophic mind? So that even my reliſh for every thing that is amiable, may be conſidered but as a part of that love and eſteem, which I bear to you.

I ſlipt away from cards to write to you; and the bell rings for ſupper: ſo I muſt unwillingly conclude my letter; though moſt willingly conclude myſelf, my charming girl,

Ever your's,

HENRY.

LETTER CXC.

FRANCES to HENRY.

I DO not, indeed, think it would be poſſible for me to ſupport myſelf, under the very diſagreeable ſituation I am in, both of body and mind, were it not for the pleaſure I receive from my dear, dear life's kind letters. I own I am jealous of ſolitude; and cannot help being uneaſy, when I think your fondneſs for that muſt, by degrees, leſſen your love for me: and, ſhould I ever be ſo happy as to live with you, my company or converſe may appear an interruption to your ſcheme of life: It will of courſe grow diſtaſteful, and I unhappy. I only ſpeak my fears, not my opinion; for that ſhall always be guided by you; nor will I doubt your love, your truth, and conſtancy.

I am vaſtly alarmed at hearing, from your brother, you do not intend coming to town. I will not believe you could form ſo unkind a reſolution: pray anſwer me directly, will you come, or no? and when, if you do come, may I expect to ſee you? You cannot conceive what a ſhock this report gave me. My whole life is, indeed, ſpent in

waiting for you: I count every hour an age, 'till we meet, and would gladly † "imp the wings of "time, which thy abſence clips." I rejoice, every night, that a day is paſſed, and that I am ſo much nearer the happy æra, I had fondly fixed for our meeting. In ſhort, I ſhould have no idea of time or its limits, but from the expectation of ſeeing you. Yet, notwithſtanding my earneſt deſire, let me intreat you not to think of coming, unleſs it be quite convenient to you.

Though I object, from ſelfiſh views, to my dear Harry's love of ſolitude, I perfectly agree with him in thinking the generality of people and converſations we meet with, to be moſtly diſagreeable; at beſt, trifling and inſipid, and quite incapable of affording that delight, which ſhould ariſe from the converſe of rational and immortal beings; yet do I think life would become irkſome, and every virtue ſtagnate in our ſouls, were they not called into action by a deſire of being approved by ſome particular perſon.

"Nature, in zeal for human amity,
"Denies, or damps an undivided joy:
"'Tis converſe qualifies for ſolitude,
"As exerciſe, for ſalutary reſt:
"By that untutor'd, contemplation raves
"A lunar prince, or famiſh'd beggar dies;
"And Nature's fool, by Wiſdom's, is outdone.
"Needful auxiliary is a friend, to give
"To ſocial man true reliſh of himſelf;
"Full on ourſelves deſcending, in a line,
"Pleaſure's bright beam is feeble in delight;
"Delight intenſe is taken by rebound;
"Reverberated pleaſure fires the breaſt.
"Celeſtial Happineſs, whene'er ſhe ſtoops

† Alluding to the ode in letter LXIV.

"To

" To viſit earth, one ſhrine the goddeſs finds,
" And one alone, to make her ſweet amends
" For abſent heav'n—the boſom of a friend:
" Where heart meets heart, reciprocally ſoft,
" Each other's pillow to repoſe divine."

Oh! were I capable of being that pleaſing, kind and rational companion to my Henry, my bliſs would be compleat. I would, with tranſport, quit the world this moment, if I might be partaker of thy ſolitude in the moſt diſtant deſart; nor caſt a wiſh, a ſigh, or thought, away on aught on earth; —for thou to me art all. And yet, perhaps, we never ſhall ſpend a ſingle day together, in that delightful, undiſturbed, peaceful retirement, which we both pant after.—My ſpirits were low before: this thought has ſunk them quite.

Adieu, my deareſt love! I am ſtill ſick: ſtill yours.

FRANCES.

LETTER CXCI.

My dear giddy girl,

I SEND you, incloſed, the cover of your laſt letter, which you ſee was ſent without a ſeal. Through what peruſals it has paſſed I cannot ſay; but am glad it has eſcaped the Cotton library of manuſcripts, to arrive ſafe to my hands, at laſt.

You have no reaſon to apprehend, that my fondneſs for retirement can ever ſeclude you from my ſociety: that taſte, or turn of mind, which gives me a diſreliſh to converſation in general, does but create in me a ſtronger impatience for the enjoyment of your's in particular. I own that my paſſion for ſolitude has grown very ſtrong in me of late; but muſt confeſs, that I ſhould chuſe to

carry it no farther, than to that bleſſed ſtate, which Adam rejoiced in, between the laſt creation and his fall:

"Adam relating, ſhe ſole auditreſs."

I agree with you that the approbation we expect from virtuous actions, is a very high incitement to them; and the love of fame, ſo ſtrongly implanted in all mankind, has always appeared to me a very good proof of the ſoul's exiſtence after death, even of its eternal exiſtence: For, as this is a paſſion, which nothing leſs than immortality can gratify, it would be impiouſly charging Providence with inſpiring us with a deſire, which we were never deſigned to poſſeſs the enjoyment of, were we to exclude the hope of an hereafter.

As the immortality of the ſoul, and the exiſtence of a God, have been often made uſe of, as reciprocal proofs, I ſhall add a few words, upon this laſt ſubject, to the many excellent arguments, more at large inſiſted upon by divines. If infidels, or ſceptics deny, or doubt the certainty of an intelligent Providence, yet ſurely the belief of it ought to be received, as we give credit to the Copernican ſyſtem; if not for its demonſtration, at leaſt, becauſe this hypotheſis accounts for all the phænomena of the celeſtial bodies; which would otherwiſe appear a heap of wild incoherence: And raſhly to deny a thing, becauſe we cannot comprehend it, is ſuch a Pyrrhoniſm, as to affirm we cannot ſee, becauſe we are not ſufficiently informed how we ſee: for to ſay we ſee by our eyes, is unphiloſophical; for our eyes are but the organs of ſight; that is, the inſtrument, not the cauſe. In looking up through the chain of effects, our reaſon heſitates at a certain period, which we preſume to be the firſt cauſe; though, beyond our comprehenſion, the links may be infinite, before they

they reach the firſt Cauſe; and then, to ſay we cannot comprehend that firſt Cauſe, is but a ſort of definition of it; for, if we could comprehend it, it could not be what we muſt ſuppoſe it.

Ever ſince you attacked me ſo well upon my hint, that, perhaps, there was as little analogy as compariſon. between the virtues of man, and the attributes of God, I have been revolving that ſubject in my mind; for we ſhould have reaſons, even for our doubts, in ſo high a matter; and the more I conſider it, the more am I confirmed in an opinion, which was but a ſurmiſe, at firſt. If we ſtick to the religion of nature, we can, indeed, only ſay, perhaps there may be no relation between them; but when we come down to revelation, we ſhall find many expreſs authorities to ſupport my argument; two of which I think ſufficient to produce What notions of juſtice can the human mind ſupply us with, for the curſe derived to all mankind from original ſin? Then, again, part of the ſecond commandment ſays, "I will viſit the "ſins of the fathers upon the children, to the "third and fourth generation of them that hate "me," &c. What human equity is there in this? Is not the crime of *hating God*, in the proper ſenſe of that expreſſion, ſufficient to incur the puniſhments denounced againſt the wicked, without involving us in our parents guilt *? Perhaps it was from ſuch inſtances as theſe in Scripture, that the Papiſts have deduced their abſurd doctrine of ſupererogation; for, if we are to be damned by another's ſin, it may be reaſonably implied, that

* That the ſins of the fathers were viſited upon the children, for ſeveral generations, was an opinion of the Heathen world, as well as of the Jews. Among many authorities, read the epode, which concludes the firſt act of the Electra of Sophocles.

we may be ſaved by another's merits. Upon the whole, I ſhall conclude with another paſſage from the Scriptures, " that the wiſdom of man is but " fooliſhneſs in the ſight of God." Away, then, with all preſumptuous reaſonings of this kind; but let us ſubmit our minds to faith, and begirt ourſelves to good works.

Adieu, my heart's delight! my ſoul's deſire! Say you are well, in your next letter; and then ſay you have obliged me.

HENRY.

LETTER CXCII.

My dear FANNY, *Belmont.*

I RECEIVED no letter from you laſt poſt, and cannot know whether I ſhall hear from you by this, 'till I return to morrow to Maidenhall. It was unkind in you to neglect writing, when you knew how uneaſy I muſt be to have ſome account of your health. I ſaw Kitty yeſterday, who heard from ſome of her friends; and, by not mentioning you, I hope this omiſſion was not owing to your diſorder.

I had a wild night of it, coming here, and have not been ſo wet, ſince I was laſt in the river. I had no cloaths with me, but what I had on my back; ſo I have betaken myſelf to my bed; from whence I am now writing to you, and drinking your health, and my own too, in milk whey. My *kind* landlady, who is alſo my tenant, upon notice of my coming here to-day, has waſhed my ſheets in the morning, and my room in the evening, to make me welcome.

I obſerved an extraordinary phænomenon, as I came along. The night was extremely dark, and the rain fell exceſſively: notwithſtanding which, the

the whole mountain, I rode over, ſeemed to be on fire, with ſuch an ember light, as is ſeen after the blaze of a bonfire is gone out. I aſked my guide the meaning of it, (whom I hired at the foot of the hill) and he told me, that all the heathy grounds hereabouts have this appearance, by night. This is certainly a very great natural curioſity; but what I never obſerved, or heard of before. If this were real fire, it might put this part of the country into a terrible combuſtion, as the collieries happen to meet in the center of theſe hills.

This thought led me inſenſibly on to the conſideration of the general conflagration, which is propheſied in Scripture; and which our faith makes us expect, at a certain period, from ſome extraordinary act of divine power; but which I never heard accounted for, from the philoſophy of nature, as it ſtands at preſent. I ſhall therefore amuſe you, and myſelf, with an hypotheſis for this purpoſe; and may ſome time or other, hereafter, refer it to wiſer heads than ours, whether there be any real weight in this whimſical opinion of mine, or no.

* I muſt firſt give you a ſhort account of aſtronomy. This globe of earth, as well as all the planets of our ſolar ſyſtem, revolves about the ſun: which rotation is effected from the compounding of two different powers; the Centripetal, which is the common gravity of bodies, that mutually attract each other, and, if acting alone, would occaſion the earth to be ſwallowed up by the ſun; and the Centrifugal, which is a force impulſed upon all the planets, at their creation, that directs them forward, in a right line, and, if not counteracted by the firſt power, would propel the body

* See Henry's letter to the Editor, laſt paragraph but two.

on through infinite ſpace, to all eternity. Now both theſe powers acting, by the almighty œconomy, upon our earth, at the ſame time, occaſion a motion compounded of both; every revolution of which is performed, in that period of time, that is called a year. From what I have ſaid it is plain, that, if the Centrifugal power was taken away, the earth muſt ruſh into the ſun, and ſo be deſtroyed by fire †. But this would be a particular act of the Almighty; and my philoſophy is to explain the poſſibility and probability of this effect, by plain and natural means; which I apprehend may be occaſioned by increaſing the weight of the earth, and conſequently it's gravitating powers: For I think natural philoſophers agree, that bodies attract, in proportion to their quantity of matter; which, at a certain degree, will make the Centripetal overcome the Centrifugal force. Now my opinion is, that every living creature, man, brute, inſect, &c. which has been produced ſince the creation, has made an addition of ſo much matter to the earth, as it's weight came to at it's birth. The increaſe of bulk, during it's life, I make no account of, becauſe that proceeds from the conſumption of the fruits of the earth, which drawing their nouriſhment from the earth itſelf, alters only the form, not the ſpecific gravity; but that weight, which the creature brings into the world, is certainly an addition, becauſe the parent neither eats or drinks more, to bring the fœtus to perfection, than if ſhe were not pregnant; and, if tried in

† There was a philoſophy, that might have accounted for this event, in another way: Water was ſaid to be the increment of plants, which periſhing, turn'd to earth. If this was true, the element of water muſt be annihilated, in a certain given time, and leave the element of fire without controul. But this philoſophy is exploded; earth is the augment, water only the vehicle.

ſcales,

cales, would be found to be of equal weight, before, and after—except in the caſe of ſickneſs, or hard labour; neither of which is the natural conſequence of procreation; as may be obſerved from brutes, and other animals; and from the generality of the human ſpecies too, who have not weakened or debauched their natural forces by luxury, effeminacy, or exceſs. I have no library here, ſo muſt be excuſed, if I am not as full, and as correct, upon this ſubject, as I might be, if I were among my books: But I always write to you in the ſame looſe manner that things occur to my mind at firſt thought; and often but juſt enter down hints, to ſupply us with topics for converſation, when we are together.

I am particularly pleaſed at this hypotheſis preſenting itſelf to my reflection; as the explanation of any prophecy, by natural means, is a ſtronger motive to our belief, than the mere faith of it, from a miracle. Now the deſtruction of the world by fire was denounced, as I apprehend, long before the laws of aſtronomy, or the gravitation of matter, were ſufficiently known, to authorize ſuch an hypotheſis as this; and, as I am not quite orthodox in ſome points, I own that I heartily rejoice, when I can make amends in others; and, in reaſoning about religion, or contemplating the ways of providence, I think we ought, in a ſtronger and more particular manner, to apply an obſervation, which I remember out of Longinus: That, in reading of Homer, Plato, or any of thoſe precious ſpirits of antiquity, when any paſſages occur, to which we cannot readily reconcile our reaſon, we ought firmly to believe that, were thoſe great Genii preſent to explain themſelves, we ſhould, to our confuſion, be convinced, that we only were guilty of thoſe errors, which we blindly charged upon them.

I think I may now lay myſelf down to ſleep, eſteeming this eſſay in the place of a prayer: And may I have the bleſſing of it in my dreams, by meeting you there in perfect health!

* "Have I not ſeen thee where thou haſt not
"been?" &c.

Adieu!

LETTER CXCIII.

My deareſt life,

NO words can expreſs the diſtracted ſituation of my mind, nor give you any idea of the ill treatment I have received from ——. Indeed, neither my health nor ſpirits can hold out much longer; but I will do all I can to ſupport myſelf under the complicated pains of body and mind, which I at preſent feel, 'till I ſee you; then gladly part with them and life together.

"So, 'till the day was won, the Greek re-
"nown'd,
"With anguiſh, wore the arrow in his wound;
"Then pluck'd the weapon from his tortur'd
"ſide,
"Let ruſh the torrent of his blood, and dy'd."

I know you will condemn me for letting my ſpirits ſink; but, as you do not know the cauſe, let not my ſweet love judge too harſhly from the effects. A little time will clear me from the imputation of wanting either philoſophy or religion: Indeed the latter is my only refuge. I am ſure the Almighty will never forſake me. I know too he orders all things right, and that my preſent diſtreſs may be

* Young's Revenge.

pro-

productive of my future happineſs. In the ſincerity of my heart, I bleſs the hand that chaſteneth; and can ſay, from my inmoſt ſoul, His will, not mine, be done! Yet ſtill, as a frail mortal, I cannot help feeling I am hurt, and complaining to you (though I do not repine); for "ſighs, and tears, "by nature, grow on pain."

Your account of your journey to Belmont, and manner of lying there, has made me vaſtly uneaſy. If you have one grain of affection for me, you will take care to preſerve my life, my health, my happineſs, for they are all bound up, and centered in my deareſt Harry's

I met with a very ſevere ſhock from the account of Mrs. P——'s death. There is yet no certainty of it; but I much fear it is too true. They ſay ſhe died in child-bed. It is very poſſible thoſe barbarians, ſhe was among, have murdered her—vile wretches! I have not patience with them: Better they had all died, than my poor, dear friend! Her failings are now forgotten: Nay, I know not that ſhe had any: but I am ſure ſhe had a thouſand virtues. Oh! ſhe is happy! But her poor little children! thoſe Hottentots will kill them.—I wiſh it were in my power to ſerve them.

Adieu, my heart's dear Harry! While I am myſelf, I ſhall be your's.

FRANCES.

LETTER CXCIV.

My deareſt life,

YOUR letter of the 9th has given me a great deal of concern. Repreſent your ſituation particularly to Lady ——; for to me you have ſpoken only in general terms; and ſtrictly follow

her friendly and conſiderate advice. My fortunes ſhall be your's, ſo uſe them freely; and that I did not offer this before, was from a regard to your character, which I have very nice and proper reaſons to be tender of. I could, with pleaſure, wear ſackcloth, and live on bread and water, "to "cloath you in purple, and make you fare ſumptuouſly every day." In ſhort, I am ſuch an adventurer in this world, that if I have luck, there's nothing in it; and if not, no œconomy can ſave my fortunes. A year's induſtry will not make me rich; but a minute's reflection can reconcile me to poverty. The utmoſt diligence can but eſtabliſh that fund, which may be thought neceſſary to this life, and which Socrates or Pliny needs not, at preſent: But let us cultivate that treaſure, which will ſupply us to eternity, and may help us to bear a part with thoſe precious ſpirits, who are happy before us.

Your ſentiment is both philoſophic and religious, "that your preſent diſtreſs may produce your fu-"ture happineſs." Socrates ſaid, he owed all his philoſophy to his wife. Every man ſhould endeavour to be a philoſopher, not ſo much to ſupport himſelf in death, as to be able to endure life; and, when misfortunes or mortifications come upon us, inſtead of repining, we ſhould thank Providence for the lucky occaſions of exerciſing that virtue. A wretched man has greater ſcope for virtue, than a happy man; and a poor man, than a rich.

I could ſay a great deal more upon this ſubject; but I would not prevent your own reflections.

Adieu, my heart's delight!

HENRY.

LETTER CXCV.

I AM infinitely obliged to my dear Harry for his very affectionate letter. Though I am far from doubting your love or conſtancy; yet I receive freſh pleaſure from every new aſſurance of both; as one is pleaſed to hear good news repeated, though it does not want *confirmation.*

Adverſity is certainly the ſchool of virtue and of wiſdom. We feel our own defects; and, by the loſs of any happineſs or advantage, firſt diſcover our own unworthineſs and His goodneſs, who gave that, and every other bleſſing which we enjoy. For my own part, I will ſay, with the pſalmiſt, "it is good for me that I have been afflicted."

Though your dear letter has made me vaſtly eaſier than I was, I am not yet calm enough to write about my affairs to Lady ——; beſides, I am unwilling to determine on any thing, 'till I ſee, and conſult you.

Adieu!

FRANCES.

HIATUS.

LETTER CXCVI.

My dear HARRY,

I AM ſorry any accident ſhould prevent our letters from paſſing in a regular courſe: Indeed it is of little conſequence what becomes of mine, but as they may occaſion a diſappointment to you.

You deſire to know what affects my mind.—It would be impoſſible to recount the multiplicity of things, which diſtreſs me.—It is true, there is a cauſe painfully eminent above the reſt, which, when

when we meet, I fear you will think too ſoon to know; * 'till then, the ſorrow it occaſions, ſhal be all my own: " For it is the wretch's comfort " ſtill to have ſome little hoard of grief, ſome " unknown woe; which they may weep, and " wail, and, glutton-like, devour alone."

Indeed, my deareſt life, I would rather ſuffer any thing than diſtreſs you. I am ſincerely ſorry, I even mentioned my illneſs to you; but I will complain no more, therefore pardon what is paſt.

I have been in a continual hurry all day: it is now very late; ſo muſt conclude with wiſhing you a thouſand times good night!

* She was breeding.

A ſecond letter is miſſing here.

LETTER CXCVII.

HENRY to FRANCES.

My deareſt life,

I SENT off an expreſs to Kilkenny, and recovered your letter of the third. I return you Lady O——'s letter, which is very kind. You cannot imagine what pleaſure your ſaying ſhe ſtays here for the winter has given me. It is a very lucky, as well as pleaſing circumſtance for you, at this particular time; which is enough to ſhew you, how happy this account has made me. * * *

" which you will not mention, 'till we meet." I beg, my Fanny, you will explain yourſelf by next poſt.

I am now returned to Montaigne, which I quitted for Pliny, at your requeſt; and I make it a rule to give you my obſervations upon every book I read.

In his hiſtory of the three moſt excellent men, he names Homer, Alexander, and Epaminondas. By excellence, here, he ſeems merely to conſider this expreſſion, with regard to fame only: But I think he has not, as one might expect, given us examples from different claſſes. The firſt is a poet, the ſecond a ſoldier, and ſo is the third, when I expected a philoſopher; and here I would name Plato, or better, Socrates: But perhaps Montaigne conſidered Epaminondas in this claſs, and in the higheſt degree, as he is recorded to have practiſed what others only teach.

Montaigne makes a good defence for repreſenting human nature not much to its advantage; as, in general, the French writers are apt to do: " Others *make* men, I but *report* them."

I am pleaſed to find he had ſome of my whims: He mentions one, which, you may remember, I ſometimes hinted to you; of taking a particular fancy to ſome one glaſs laid down at table, though of equal dimenſions with the reſt, out of which I often take a great pleaſure in drinking; nay, I have gone ſo far, once or twice, as to pay a man's club for the exchange of his glaſs. Whence ſuch caprices as this proceed, I do not remember that any of the expoſitors upon human nature have accounted: and I think it would be an ingenious and amuſing ſubject to inquire into.

This puts me in mind of a theme, I have a great mind to recommend for a premium to the ſociety

of

of * Dijon in France; which is an eſſay upon Metaphorical Taſte; being a liking, or admiration, not confined to, or deducible from the eſtabliſhed rules of beauty, harmony, order, or truth, which ſhould be the natural or rational foundations of our approbation. Why is the mind of man, when endued with what is called *taſte*, delighted with extravagant flights in poetry, extraordinary metaphors, exceſſes in grammar, chromatics in muſic, &c. How come we to be charmed with things, which offend common ſenſe, or ſhock the natural ear? Nay, to ſhew that taſte is not only above, but even ſometimes averſe from rational admiration, we need but recollect the pleaſure we receive from viewing ſome of the deformities of nature, as rocks, precipices, &c. and at the ſame time remember, that we are ſenſible of a certain horror, during the contemplation.

Have you ſeen that piece, which carried the laſt premium at Dijon, upon this theſis, Whether the re-eſtabliſhment of arts and ſciences has contributed to the refinement of manners? I have read it, and like the ſide of the queſtion he has choſen, by denying it. I think, the ſubject might have been handled more at large, and to better advantage, than the author has done there.

Quid juvat innumeros ſcire atque evolvere caſus,
Si fugienda facis, et facienda fugis?

What does it import us to know the ſprings of good and ill, while "we do thoſe things, which "we ought not to have done, and leave undone "thoſe things, which we ought to have done?" I have not yet ſeen the anſwer to it; but, when I

* This academy propoſed Theſes, and offered premiums for the beſt diſcourſes upon the ſubjects.

have,

have, I ſhall probably determine the diſpute like Sir Roger de Coverley, by concluding "that much "may be ſaid on both ſides."

What the Genevan ſays of learning with regard to morals, I have often ſaid of it with regard to underſtanding—That it has ſo over-loaded the mind of man, that, like too full a ſtomach, the digeſtive powers have not room to exert themſelves; or it has confined our reflections, by ſetting bounds to our inquiries, or given us a biaſs out of the right road, by obliging us to think too much after one another, and following in a beaten track. When reaſon attempts to exerciſe herſelf in the mind of the learned, ſhe finds it, like a ſtorehouſe, ſo filled with the old trumpery of the antients, that ſhe has hardly room to ſtretch her limbs. I am for recurring up to the original of all things, and drinking truth at the fountain-head; not quenching my thirſt of knowledge in polluted ſtreams. Rivers, in paſſing through populous cities, acquire indeed a ſoftneſs and a richneſs, but loſe the ſweetneſs and purity, which they brought from their ſpring. If you want to inform yourſelf of art or ſcience, withdraw to your ſtudy; if of truth or nature, retire within yourſelf. Reading ſhould be your exerciſe, but reflection your ſtudy. Senſe is a bottle of eſſence, which loſes its ſtrength by dilatation; or like a wedge of gold, which, hammered into plates, or drawn into wire, extends its dimenſions, but weakens its ſubſtance.

Adieu my life!

HENRY.

A ſecond letter is miſſing here.

LETTER CXCVIII.

FRANCES to HENRY.

ROCHEFOUCAULT ſays, "In the adverſity of our beſt friends we find ſomething "that does not diſpleaſe us." I will not abſolutely ſay this maxim is verified in you; yet I cannot help obſerving, with what vaſt calmneſs you have endured my misfortunes. I do indeed believe, that the diſtreſſes of others furniſh the beſt opportunity for exerting our philoſophy.

"When they are laſh'd, we kiſs the rod,
"Reſigning to the will of God:"

And then we have ſuch a charming ſuperiority by making light of thoſe misfortunes, which do not affect ourſelves. But I ſhould be glad to ſee one of our modern philoſophers endure the loſs of health with that indifference, they recommend to others.

If Lady O—— ſtays in the kingdom, which is yet doubtful, ſhe will not come to Dublin the whole winter. I heartily wiſh ſhe may hold her reſolution of ſtaying at ——, as I hope and believe I ſhall ſpend ſome time with her; for I am abſolutely determined not to continue here long. When we meet, you ſhall know my reaſons; which, I fancy, will be ſufficient to make you entirely of my opinion: in the mean time, I ſhall exert the little ſtrength of body and mind, I have left, to bear up againſt the diſtreſſes of both, without complaining. I muſt intreat, for the preſent, you will not deſire any explanation from me; for I am reſolved not to enter into particulars, 'till I ſee

I ſee you; which I never ſo earneſtly longed for, as now. I could almoſt wiſh you were as impatient to ſee me; we ſhould then meet before "the "beginning of term." However, a few days will make no great difference; and I am content to wait, 'till buſineſs anſwers the ſame end as inclination.

Though I never wanted the aid of philoſophy more than now, I find myſelf leſs qualified than ever to ſeek its help: "In pain, philoſophy is "ſpleen; in health, 'tis only eaſe."——Perhaps it is owing to my want of health, that I find my mind a perfect chaos. I have not attention ſufficient to read for a quarter of an hour. I perceive myſelf frequently abſent in company, without being able to recollect, what I was thinking of: Strange ſituation!—When wilt thou recal me to myſelf? If you have fixed the time of your coming to town, let me know by return of the poſt, that I may be certified, not *how long*, but *when* I ſhall live.

Adio, Caro!

FRANCES.

LETTER CXCIX.

HENRY to FRANCES.

I RECEIVED a letter from you, juſt as I was leaving Maidenhall yeſterday, which has ſurprized me more than any thing I have ever met with.

The reaſon of applying thoſe philoſophic lectures, which you are offended at, was from this blunder: That I thought the loſs of health, fortune, friends, or any other unhappineſs of life, was the proper ſeaſon to recommend ſuch medicines; and it ought to be obſerved, I did not uſe ſuch reflections

reflections to ſhew how *I* could bear your misfortunes, but to inſtruct and aſſiſt *you* to ſupport yourſelf under them. He, who would comfort another, comes not, as I apprehended, with ſighs and groans.

I ſhall never, upon any occaſion, trouble you with more of my philoſophy, but ſhall always cheriſh it in my heart; becauſe, at this time, it ſtands your friend, and helps me to conclude myſelf, as uſual,

My dear Fanny,

Ever your's.

HIATUS.

LETTER CC.

My deareſt FANNY,

I RETURN you Lady O——'s letter, and am pleaſed to find, that you ſtill hold on a correſpondence with her. I love her for rallying your ſpirits. I am aſhamed for my Fanny, with two ſuch philoſophic friends, to be ſo caſt down. She ſeems to ſolicit your writing often to her, which ſurely I need not intreat you to obey; but ſhall only leave you more at liberty to do ſo, by letting you know, that, if time preſſes, I will take your having wrote to her, as a ſufficient apology for your leaving me to hunt through the ſtores of antiquity for ſomething to amuſe me, in the room of thoſe letters you neglect to me. How much do I regard your advantage, before my own pleaſure? And for any favour, ſhe can ever do me, I thus pay the price before-hand.

I thank you for your kind ſentiments with regard to paſſing your time with me; and it is certain that thoſe portions of life, which we ſpend agreeably

to

to ourſelves, are all that can be computed in a philoſopher's kalendar. I am pleaſed with the epitaph, which Similis, a general under Adrian, directed to be inſcribed on his tomb-ſtone. He had ſpent a long life in perils and fatigues, 'till about ſeven years before his death; when he retired to his villa, paſſing his time as became a man of religion, ſenſe, and philoſophy. The Latin is, "Hic jacet Similis, cujus ætas multorum annorum "fuit: Ipſe ſeptem duntaxat annos vixit." I will attempt the tranſlation for you:

My life, O Time! to many years amount,
But ſeven only make my own account.

For my part, I have made three diviſions of my time; and, according to the diſtinctions I make, there are but two portions of them to be attributed to my life. When I am in company, I *paſs* my time; when I am alone, I *ſpend* it; and, while I am with you, I *enjoy* it.*

Since the election at Callen, I have had the happineſs to be entirely alone; which the hurry, I was then in, has given me a thorough reliſh for. I do not think it amiſs to conſider the world as a priſon; where we are ſubject to ſuch company, as chance, neceſſity, vice, or misfortune, have aſſociated us with: and ſolitude may be deemed the true ſiege of freedom; as there, alone, we can be maſters of ourſelves, our time, and occupations.

* At noſtri bene computentur anni,
Et quantum tetricæ tulere febres;
Aut languor gravis, aut mali dolores
A vita meliore ſeperentur:
Infantes ſumus, & ſenes videmur.
Ætatem Priamique, Neſtorique
Longam qui putat eſſe, Martiane,
Multum decipiturque, falliturque,
Non eſt vivere, ſed valere vita. MART.

The

The only thing, in which I think Auguſtus attempted to be great, was his wiſh to live, to retire; but he was never great enough to execute that noble ſentiment. It is ſomewhere ſaid, that "privacy and freedom is the wiſh of the great, but "the privilege of the mean." The life, I lead at preſent, is certainly the end propoſed of all the labours and perils of the great, in all ſtates of life; then what a true, philoſophic pleaſure muſt a man be ſenſible of, who has reached this goal, without being out of breath for it! while he looks back, with compaſſion, upon millions, who are ſweating and toiling; caſting away pomps, faſces, and fortune, to make themſelves light for the race, and ſhouldering through oppoſing crouds, to come up to him! What the philoſopher Cyneas ſaid to Pyrrhus might be here applied, but that I hate quotations; however, I ſhall give you one: Diogenes ſaid, that "Ariſtotle muſt go to dinner, "when Alexander's bell rung; but he was at li-"berty to wait for the ſummons of his appetite." In the world, we are obliged to act by rule; but, in retirement, we can act according to reaſon.

Adieu, thou dear object or idea of thoſe portions of time, which I treaſure up as the only parts of my life!

HENRY.

LETTER CCI.

I AM much obliged to my dear Harry for the indulgence he is ſo kind to grant me: I have a much better right to plead that privilege, at preſent, than I can ever have from writing to Lady O——, or any other perſon; which is my being utterly incapable of writing, from real illneſs. I have been all day on the bed; and, though I ventured

tured to Abby-Street, in hopes of rouzing my ſpirits, I find myſelf ſo very weak and languid, that I am hardly able to hold the pen. I have had a ſevere fit of the rheumatiſm in my arm; which, joined to a conſtant cough, prevents my ſleeping an hour at a time, the whole night.

I am aſhamed of living a conſtant complainant. I think, it would be but decent in me to die; for, indeed, I am quite weary of life: but "Death "comes not at call, nor mends his ſloweſt pace "for plaints or cries."

I am extremely glad you are ſo happy in your retirement. I would by no means have you quit it, for the tumultuous haunts of buſy, idle men. Let me, at leaſt, have the ſatisfaction of thinking you are well, and well pleaſed; which is the only thing on earth, that can give real pleaſure to my deareſt life's own ſick

FANNY.

LETTER CCII.

FRANCES to HENRY.

I SEND you Mr. Lyttelton's monody, which I am charmed with, though I think there appears more poetry than love in it *: Not that the grief is not well, but that it is too well expreſſed; which a perſon who really felt, could not, perhaps, ſo aptly deſcribe: and methinks I perceive more of the poet's art, than of the mourner's ſorrow.

If, indeed, he be truly ſincere, I declare that I would rather have Mr. Lyttelton my widower, than

* Spencer ſays of love, "'tis nothing nice," and as grief is the fondeſt part of love, it ſhould be ſtill leſs ſo.
FRANCES.

be

be the wife of any other man in the world, except yourſelf: for then I ſhould have had the higheſt happineſs this world can boaſt of, the being beloved and eſteemed by a man of ſenſe, taſte, and virtue; the merit of which muſt inſure the happineſs of the next; which, if higher than that, riſes above the power of human wiſh to deſire, or of human wit to conceive.

There is one criterion of Mr. Lyttelton's ſincerity, which I have eſtabliſhed in my own mind; and that is his marrying, or not marrying again.

Adieu!

LETTER CCIII.

HENRY to FRANCES.

I RECEIVED the monody, and am as much charmed with it as you are; but I could not help ſmiling at your jealous criticiſm. I do not look upon the poem in the light that you do; for it affected me in a higher concern, that it was poſſible for your death to inſpire me with every ſentiment of grief there expreſſed, without the poetry to publiſh them to the world.

To a perſon uſed to read and write poetry, figures, alluſions, and numbers are as familiar, as plain proſe is to other people:

—— —— "For the numbers came."

Poets have generally pleaded their incapacity, on account of grief; but this was always in order to raiſe the merit of the poem. Tickel ſays,

"Grief unaffected ſuits but ill with art,
"And flowing numbers with a broken heart."

However,

However, he has contrived to ſigh out as beautiful an elegy, as ever was written in any language.

Waller ſaid, that poets excel only in fiction; but this was rather an ingenious apology for writing better on Cromwell than on Charles: It had more of wit than criticiſm in it; or, if there was any thing of the latter, it muſt be true only of heroic poetry; becauſe neither the actions, virtues, or real characters of men are high enough to adorn the epic verſe.

But there is a mixture of tenderneſs and dignity, which form the characteriſtic of elegy, that agrees perfectly well with figures, which it naturally inſpires; and the more ſincere the grief, the bolder will theſe be of courſe.

There is one authority, which puts an end to any further criticiſm upon this ſubject. Horace ſays, "if you would make me weep, you muſt "firſt drop tears yourſelf:" Which ſhews, that the beauty of elegy muſt riſe in proportion to the ſincerity of the mourner.

I remember the elder Palma, whoſe taſte in muſic I was fond of, ſat down, one day, to compoſe ſomething for me; perhaps I was in love at that time, for I deſired he would make it expreſſive of the moſt melting tenderneſs: Upon which he replied, "Il faut pleurer donc;" and, as the Italians have their paſſions at will, he began to ſigh, and actually wrought himſelf up to a flow of tears, while he was writing.

But I might have ſaved you the trouble of all this criticiſm, only by referring you to Mr. Lyttelton's character; who is far from being ſo ſlight a man, as to *play* the poet upon ſo ſerious and affecting a ſubject: And there is one particular, which proves to me his ſincerity beyond all doubt; which

is, that, among a great choice and variety of his truly claſſical and poetic writings, this poem is, I think, the chef d'oeuvre.

All the fault I find with Mr. Lyttelton, is, that he did not under-write himſelf upon this occaſion; for there is a certain gallant pride in an ingenuous nature, which tempts it to fall ſhort even of the praiſe it thinks is due, and is willing to beſtow, leſt it ſhould be miſtaken for adulation. However, there is, at the ſame time, a certain fondneſs in the lover, which inclines him to give immortality to the object of his paſſion, which is not to be hoped for, without an exertion of the fulleſt powers of poeſy.

I pity a poet's grief more than any other man's; for his natural warmth, tenderneſs of ſentiment, and livelineſs of imagination, give ſorrow a power of ſinking deeper in his heart, than others can poſſibly be affected with. When a plain man loſes a miſtreſs, wife, child, or friend, he laments merely for the loſs of ſo much property: But when theſe dear connections are torn off from a perſon of a delicate taſte, he feels as if he had loſt part of himſelf, *animæ dimidium*—nay worſe, for the remainder is a burden to him.

Your criterion I will not admit of; for a man, who is ſincere in his grief for the loſs of a wife, is the more likely to marry again. When pleaſures are flown, nature ſtrongly ſolicits the recovery of them: The chaſte nuptial joys engroſs the whole man, and form his taſte and ſentiments entirely to ſuch ſocial enjoyments which, by fond indulgence, become at laſt his ſole ſcheme of happineſs; and when thoſe charming ties are diſſolved, he has the world, as it were, to begin anew; and it is ſurely then more natural, and more rational too, to endeavour to renew the pleaſures we have been ſo well

well acquainted with, and approved of, than to attempt a ſpiritleſs ſuccedaneum to them.

So that, if ever your *criſis* ſhould come to paſs, we ought not to doubt his ſincerity to the laſt wife, but rather ſay, that he had paid a very high compliment to his future one.

Adieu!

HENRY.

LETTER CCIV.

Dear FANNY,

AS the poſt for this day is not come in, I do not know yet, whether you leave town to-morrow or no; therefore I ſhall write to you, becauſe I would not ſpare myſelf any trouble certain, for even the chance of giving you a quarter of an hour's amuſement.

I met with a ſmall treatiſe yeſterday, intitled, "On the Employment of Time." It is wrote by Gilbert Weſt. I think it is very well *collected*; for, indeed, it is moſtly a heap of quotations, and ſhews more of learning than underſtanding: For a work of this kind almoſt any man may *compile*, who reads with a common-place book by him.

Young, the ſatiriſt, has two very ſevere lines againſt quotations, which, for that reaſon, I ſhall not recite; and there is certainly nothing ſo tireſome to the reader as writings of that kind, which are only to be admitted in works of fancy, but not at all neceſſary upon moral or philoſophical ſubjects. For example; if Mr. Weſt ſpeaks ſenſe or reaſon, what occaſion is there to inform us, that Cicero thought the ſame way, or ſaid the ſame thing? It is argument, not authority, which con-

vinces. All knowledge is derived originally from the human underſtanding; and a thought is nevertheleſs our own, becauſe it has been hit on by ſomebody elſe before: And one may as well quote Adam for breathing, becauſe he was the firſt creature who did ſo, as Euclid for ſaying that the three angles of every triangle are equal to two right ones, becauſe he was the firſt perſon who demonſtrated that propoſition *.

A quoting author is juſt as ridiculous as a country girl, who, upon her firſt coming to town, being decked out by the help of her friends, ſhould make public acknowledgment from whom ſhe had her ſtockings, her ſhift, her ſtays, &c. So that, if every perſon was there to claim their own, ſhe would be left as naked as the jay in the fable, or as ſuch a pye bald author, ſay *writer* rather, ſay compiler, ſay publiſher, ſay ſecond-hand cook, who gives you a beggar's diſh out of fragments, or ſay Printer's ſign-poſt, upon which are paſted the heterogeneous ſcraps of many authors.

I remember a ſtupid ſort of fellow, who uſed to put me in mind of theſe men, who are too modeſt to ſay any thing of their own; for he never aſked for bread, drink, told you what o'clock it was, or mentioned even the moſt trifling occurrence, without adding, "as the man ſaid:" And whenever he had a mind, like theſe men, to ſhew the extent of his learning, by recurring up to the moſt an-

* Epictetus in his XIX chapter, ridicules this impertinence finely; for, after he has made a philoſophic diviſion of things, into good, evil, and indifferent, ſome body abſurdly aſks him, whence he learned ſuch diſtinction? "from Hellanicus, ſays he, in his hiſtory of "Egypt; for what ſignifies it (if it be juſt) whether I "received my information from Hellanicus, Diogenes, "or any other philoſopher?"

tient

tient authority, he would cry, "as the man ſaid "* *a great while ago.*"

The importance of the ſubject, which Mr. Weſt treats on, is great, and ought to be the frequent reflection of every man of ſenſe, morality, or religion. He has conſidered it with regard to the two laſt, and placed the matter in ſeveral very ſtrong lights: But, as a thing of this conſequence cannot ſtand in too many points of view, I ſhall attempt to conſider it with relation to the firſt, merely as a rational man, without any regard to virtue; relative only to our preſent ſtate, and, in that reſpect, confined intirely to ourſelves: Which few hints you may ſtile, "Of the Oeconomy of Time"—Of the ſimple enlargement of it—Or, a certain method to lengthen life, in ſpite of fate, or of the grave.

There is an expreſſion often made uſe of by thoughtleſs people, which aſtoniſhes and provokes me extremely; "Let us do ſo and ſo, to kill time." It is ſome revenge, however, to obſerve, what ſuicides they are, at the ſame time of this moſt horrid and unnatural murder: So true it is, that we and our time muſt live and die together. We generally lament the ſhortneſs of man's life taken together, while we are blaming the tediouſneſs of every portion of it †. This contradiction may be accounted for, if we conſider, that as time, unemployed, lags heavily along, an idle perſon, for this reaſon, muſt complain of tireſome days;

* Alii alios ſe convincere arbitrantur, cum multos, & celebres teſtes produxerint: Verum hæc probationis ratio nullius eſt momenti ad veritatem. Cic.

I am here quoting quotations againſt quotations, like Jeremy declaiming againſt wit; but if 'tis allowable in any caſe, it is in this.

† When men ſay "Life is ſhort," it is not time, but their extravagance, that is to blame: a ſquanderer may make the largeſt patrimony ſcanty. Henry

and as duration is marked only by the ſucceſſion of ideas, his life muſt appear ſhorteſt, who has feweſt actions or paſſages to recollect.

To conſider man, then, only with regard to this life: what a miſerable wretch muſt he be, whoſe paſſing minutes are told as ſo many hours, and whoſe paſt years are reflected upon but as ſo many days?

Let us then, as rational creatures, contrive ſo to employ ourſelves in a ſeries of actions, which by marking every period of our lives, we may enjoy this great and happy advantage, that the preſent moments ſhall glide imperceptibly away, and our paſt age appear ſo long, upon ſumming up, that we may not murmur at the ſhort ſpan "of threeſcore years and ten."

O Vita ſtulto longa, ſapienti brevis!

Again, 'tis computed, that the generality of men ſleep away about one third of their time, that is, about eight hours in the twenty-four. Now five hours is full ſufficient for any perſon, who would preſerve health of body, and vigour of mind *: ſo that there may be above three hours ſaved out of every day, which is about one day in the week, and that is one year in ſeven. Then, by the time a man has reached his grand climacteric, he may be ſaid to have lived juſt nine years more than ſome of his twin cotemporaries.

What would a man give for nine years added to ſixty-three! How much more valuable are nine years before ſixty-three! for ſurely that time is the moſt preferable, which we can live without growing older. We cannot, indeed, borrow time from death; but we can take it from it's ſemblance,

* Riſing early is but a minute's uneaſineſs, for ſeveral hours pleaſure.

ſleep—

ſleep—Which brings me to the cloſe of my propoſition, or "a certain method to lengthen life, in "ſpight of fate, or the grave."

HENRY.

LETTER CCV.

Dear HARRY,

I HAVE read the treatiſe you mention, but like your ſupplement to it much better. It is a double charity to write to me on ſubjects at preſent, becauſe there is not a book in this houſe which could ſupply me with matter for a minute's reflection; which makes the time, except what I ſpend in reading your letters, or writing to you, paſs like an idle dream, which leaves no trace behind.

Your letter has made me grow quite impatient at the reflection of having loſt ſo much of my life. The deſire of improving my mind, and fixing its contemplation upon proper objects, increaſes daily; yet, by ſome unforeſeen accident, I find myſelf continually deprived even of one day's retirement, and am, if I may uſe the expreſſion, conſtantly employed in idleneſs.

The tediouſneſs of preſent time is often irkſome to the wiſe man as well as the fool, though not in ſo great a degree; which has been conſidered as a proof of the ſoul's immortality: For we are continually puſhing forward to ſome point of time, which, when arrived at, falls ſhort of the expectations we had raiſed upon it; we ſtill perſiſt in flattering ourſelves, and fix our happineſs on ſome future period, which, in its courſe, brings diſappointment too; and yet we ſtill go on, wiſhing the preſent hour was paſt, and hoping peace or joy from ſome more diſtant æra; 'till the grave open-

ing, interrupts our ſchemes, and ſhews the only proſpect where the ſoul can reſt. Oh! may we fix our graſp on that ſtrong-hold, which cannot, will not fail us; and, like the Patriarch, wreſtle for a bleſſing! Let the incumbering world recede, and even our mutual loves decay, before the glorious hope of immortality! What joy, what more than tranſport, do I feel, in thinking that, when death ſhall have diſſolved the poor, infirm, and feeble forms, which now incaſe our ſpirits, we ſhall meet again, conſcious of each other's love and truth, in perfect bliſs above!

I do not, however, cordially approve of your leſſening the portions of time allotted for ſleep. It is wiſe Nature prompts, and all philoſophy is vain which dares oppoſe her. She has appointed equal periods to labour and to reſt; while man, impatient to be happy, ſteals from his only promiſed bleſſing, eaſe, to ſquander on the vain purſuit of wealth or pleaſure. I muſt own, notwithſtanding your philoſophical moral, which I acknowledge to be very ingenious, that I am a great friend to ſleep, whom Statius calls the moſt * amiable of all the Gods. When tired out with grief or pain, it ſtrengthens and renews the ſprings of life; we wake refreſhed, and feel a kind of ſilent hymn of gratitude ariſe in our minds for this, more than for any other bleſſing. While we ſleep, we are, at leaſt, negatively good, incapable of acting or deſigning ill; and I am afraid, that even the beſt man has more to anſwer for his waking than his ſleeping hours, be he never ſo great a ſluggard. However, I ſhall receive one advantage from your doctrine, that I ſhall inſiſt upon your practice keeping up to your preaching; and I will certainly produce your letter againſt you, whenever I find

* Juvenis placidiſſime Divûm. STAT.

you

you begin to yawn about ten o'clock; for that is a moſt unreaſonable *hour* for a perſon to go to bed, who has not occaſion to ſleep more than *five*.

LETTER CCVI.

My deareſt FANNY,

I DO not leſſen the portion of time allotted by nature for reſt. I find five hours ſufficient for my health and ſpirits; more ſleep injures both; then rationally I conclude, nature meant no more. Now every indulgence we take, beyond what nature requires, is rather a fatigue, than a refreſhment. This is equally true in meat, and drink, and ſleep: And, to conſider it in this light, that paſſage in Lord Grimſton's play, which, along with the whole performance, has been ſo laughed at, is not quite ſo abſurd, as it is generally taken; "I'll reſt my wearied bones, till they more wea-"ried be." I do not think, with you, that a man is paſſively good, all the while he is aſleep; it would be great favour to allow him to be even negatively bad. The mind of man was framed for a ſeries of rational thought, and his life deſigned for a courſe of moral actions; if then, without neceſſity, he ceaſes to think, or act, to the beſt of his powers, he mars the end of his creation. Nay, I think, we can hardly refrain from charging poſitive guilt upon a perſon, who ſleeps more than he needs. Sleep is a temporary death; and, as I hinted to you upon this ſubject before, how a man may lengthen his life, he by this means ſhortens it, of courſe; then, for ſo much, he is guilty of ſuicide. Is not a man guilty of theft, who ſteals from an heap, becauſe he does not pocket the whole? And, if a parcel of money

be laid in a line upon a table, is he not equally criminal, who takes from the middle, as if he ſtole from one end?

Adieu!

HENRY.

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*LETTER CCVII.

Dear FANNY,

AS I never read with complete pleaſure, but when we are together; ſo it gives me uneaſineſs, in my muſæum, when any ſentiment or criticiſm occurs to me, that I cannot immediately communicate it to you: And this is the reaſon, that many of my letters treat upon ſubjects, which ſeem not proper for ſuch familiar epiſtles, as our's generally are; ſo that, perhaps, ſome of them appear ſtiff, merely from the freedom of them; for I never ſit down with a deſign of writing you *a letter*, but, when I take pen in hand, I write you whatever occurs to my mind at that time, whether poetry, metaphyſics, politics, or divinity.

For inſtance now, who could think of entertaining a young woman of wit, gaiety, and poetic rapture, with a diſcourſe upon ſelf-murder? But I happened this morning to look into a treatiſe againſt ſuicide, by Dr. Watts, which I think a very inſufficient performance.

Authorities drawn from the Scriptures, or writings of the philoſophers, may have effect upon very weak or over religious minds: But reaſons, not authorities, are requiſite to men of ſenſe, or free reflection; which a man may have, without being an Atheiſt, or merely a Deiſt.

* See Henry to the Editor, laſt paragraph.

In

In thoſe places, where the author attempts to reaſon, he does it very imperfectly; of which I ſhall give you two inſtances, among many. He ſays, "We are placed here, like a centinel at his "poſt," &c. and after going on, with a great deal of common-place, on that head, concludes, from the *ſuppoſed* analogy of human and divine things, that ſuicide muſt be a crime. But this is begging the queſtion. What authority from reaſon have we to ſay, that man is placed here as a centinel? Or, what certainty have we of this analogy? In metaphyſics, indeed, we are obliged to give ſome definitions of our ideas, in order to help us to diſcourſe intelligibly about them; but, in reality, there may be no more relation between the things themſelves, and our ideas of them, than there is between colours and ſounds; though a blind man, to give us his notion of red, compared it to the ſound of a trumpet, but yet, in true philoſophy, it comes as near the ſound of a lute: And, indeed, the ſpeculative divines ſeem to me, generally, to reaſon, like this man, with more fancy than philoſophy.

Another piece of reaſoning, he makes uſe of, is this: "That, though we cannot perceive any "relation, we are placed in, with regard to this "life, (as in ſome inſtances may be the caſe) which "might make our death a moral evil; yet, *per-* "*haps*, we may be appointed by God to influence "ſome future event, and ſo the ends of Provi- "dence may be diſappointed by one man's impa- "tience." Now I think it extremely weak, perhaps impious, to imagine, that it can be in the power of one man, or mankind united, to fruſtrate the leaſt ſcheme or deſign of Providence: and a thief, at the gallows, may make uſe of ſuch an argument with as much reaſon as any body elſe:

So that this reaſoning, by proving too much, proves nothing.

Watts has, indeed, ſummed up all that has ever been ſaid upon this occaſion; but, to tell the truth, I never met with any thing ſatisfactory upon the ſubject; which is owing to the cautious, but unfair manner of arguing, upon this head, uſed by the divines; who, for fear of giving the leaſt encouragement to deſperate men, will not admit of any ſort of latitude in this matter.

Adieu!

HENRY.

LETTER CCVIII.

FRANCES to HENRY.

ON finding that my dear Harry's letter had been opened before it came to my hands, I began to apprehend that my letters might have been intercepted. I know not how this treatment affects you; but it has filled me with the higheſt reſentment: For ſure, it is the extreme of inſolence and cruelty to deprive us of the only means left to ſoften the tedious, melancholy hours of abſence: nor can I believe that any law, human or divine, has veſted even a parent with ſuch a power. What barbarous tyranny then to aſſume it!

I have often experienced the uneaſineſs you mention, at reading any thing that pleaſed me when you was not with me. One finds but a vague enjoyment in any pleaſure, unſhared by the perſon beloved.

I think I have reaſon to reſent the apology you make for writing upon ſubjects above a ſlight girl's reflection. If you conſider me in that light, I muſt

muſt join with the world in condemning your taſte: But if, as you have flattered me, my perſon has the leaſt ſhare in your affection, that you love my mind, and would improve it, in order to render it capable of the higheſt enjoyment, that of converſing with you, why need you make any apology for taking the proper method of rendering it worthy of your regard? I have often told you, that no ſubject can appear dull or abſtruſe to me, which you write on: Nay, I have gone farther, and ſometimes fancied, that if you were to write in a language I was wholly unacquainted with, I ſhould certainly underſtand you; at leaſt I am ſure I ſhould, if I was to hear and ſee you ſpeak it.

I have never met with any of Dr. Watts's writings; but, from the ſpecimen you give, I take him to be a better chriſtian than philoſopher. Though I am ſure there may be many ſtronger arguments againſt ſuicide, than thoſe you quote from him, yet I am pleaſed at his conſidering every individual, though without viſible tye or connection, as neceſſary to the well-being of the whole ſpecies; for, as the great artificer made nothing in vain, the wretch who finds not happineſs in his own boſom, or in any outward objects, may, from this principle alone, conclude ſelf-murder to be a crime.

But, after all, what are all arguments about this matter? Only ſpeculative eſſays: for I am convinced, that no perſon ever committed the act, but an Atheiſt or a madman. Then it would be in vain to reaſon with the firſt, upon principles which he denies you; and it would be a jeſt to reaſon with the other at all.

After this reflection, I do not look upon ſuicide in that ſhocking light which other people do: For, with regard to the Atheiſt, I fear it is pretty equal, to his poor ſoul, after what manner he dies; and,

as

as to the madman, I throw him upon his mercy, who could, had he pleaſed, have "made reaſon "rule, and paſſion be its ſlave."

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*LETTER CCIX.

HENRY to FRANCES.

* * * \

guilt in this act: And, ſo far as it is a crime, it is of the higheſt nature ſo, as it has the aggravation of preſumption, the ſin of acting againſt nature, and the impoſſibility of repentance.

However there may be particular inſtances where the thing may be indifferent in itſelf; yet, even here, though the action be innocent, the turn of mind, which prompts to it, muſt be extremely vicious. It argues an impatience and raſhneſs, which are the ſigns of an intemperance of ſoul, a diſregard to the opinion of this world, which every good man ſhould have reſpect for, or a deſpair of God's providence, which a man of philoſophy or religion ſhould never betray.

There are, I think, but three things which can provoke a perſon to this deſperate act; pain, poverty, or ſhame. If from the firſt circumſtance, then he has forgot what all the trials in this life were intended for; and ſo fooliſhly refuſes that phyſic, which may give him health to immortality. If from he ſecond, it is owing to a falſe pride, and an unchriſtian ſpirit, joined to a habit of idleneſs, which creates a ſlothful deſpondency. If from the third, he but ſeals his name with infamy, makes that ſhame the more public, and deprives himſelf of any opportunity of retrieving his character. It was finely ſaid, by ſome great man, upon hearing libels had been wrote againſt him, "I will live ſo, "as to give the lie to their reproach."

Suppoſe a criminal leading forth to execution, even he ſhall have no power over his own life, though already forfeited and condemned; for he adds to his crime, by rebelling againſt the laws of his country, and deprives the community of a wholeſome example of public juſtice. Beſide, as all human inflictions may be conſidered as trials of our virtue, ſo may even legal puniſhments, if undergone

dergone with reſignation, contrition, and hope, be conſidered as atonements for our crimes.

Thus you ſee, that even in the moſt indifferent caſe, though the action itſelf may be morally innocent, yet it can never be performed but by a vicious actor.

In ſhort, it is an action contrary to the laws of God and man. The firſt, without recurring to authorities, may be proved from the natural abhorrence we find in ourſelves from the act, which, to demonſtration, ſhews the ſenſe of Providence about the matter: and the ſecond, we know from the general ſenſe of mankind, who have endeavoured to deter from, by affixing ignominy upon it, the only way of dealing with the dead.

But all theſe reflections may not occur to a man in the hurry of the act; for there are but few deliberate ſuicides: yet ſurely any moment of time may afford us leiſure for this ſhort expoſtulation; "What if it ſhould be a crime? Then, great "God, how ſhocking muſt his ſituation be, "whoſe conviction comes too late for repen-"tance!"

HENRY.

P. S. Keep this letter for me.

HIATUS.

LETTER CCX.

FRANCES to HENRY.

AS I am thoroughly convinced, that my dear Harry is a much better judge of his own affairs, than I can pretend to be, I will never let my over-anxiouſneſs for his welfare betray me into ſo great

great an error, as offering my advice; but reſt ſatisfied with believing, that he will uſe every honeſt and prudent means for our mutual happineſs.

I was ſo extremely ill on Saturday, that I was not able to hold a pen. The continual diſtraction and uneaſineſs of my mind has almoſt deſtroyed my little body. I am doubly unhappy, that your circumſtances prevent your coming to town: your preſence would ſoften all my ſorrows, and ſubdue even pain and ſickneſs. How have I flattered myſelf, that you longed as ardently to ſee me, as I do to ſee you! and yet you will not anſwer to my oft-repeated queſtion, When will you come? I am impatient at your abſence, and yet afraid to wiſh you here. The ſituation of your affairs diſtracts me: I do not regard myſelf, but cannot bear to think that you are unhappy. Do not be angry with me, Harry, for ſaying, that I moſt earneſtly wiſh and pray the Almighty to take me to his mercy. I know my death would be of uſe to you: your father, and all your friends, would then be free from any apprehenſion of your injuring yourſelf for an unhappy woman, who would die to ſerve you *. That ſingle conſideration could diſarm the ſpectre of his terrors, and take away his ſting; for I could part with thee, my life, my love, my ſoul, to ſave thee from misfortune and diſtreſs!

My ſpirits are ſo entirely ſunk, that I am utterly unable to write: You may ſcold, if you pleaſe; but, indeed, I cannot get the better of myſelf.

Adieu, then, my ſoul's hope, my life's pain and pleaſure!

FRANCES.

* Their marriage was ſtill a ſecret.

LETTER CCXI.

My dear FANNY,

THE dependence, you expreſs, upon my doing every thing for our mutual happineſs, was not neceſſary to encourage me to do ſo, upon all occaſions; but, if I needed any inducement, that confidence alone would be ſufficient to oblige me to it; and I ſhall never attempt to over-rule your will, but to better inform it; or the more effectually to anſwer the great end of all my thoughts and actions, namely, your happineſs and eſtabliſhment, and my own, only through ſuch charming means. My not going to Dublin before this, is one inſtance, I may give, that I prefer both our intereſts, before our pleaſure; and, if I have not fixed the day, at your frequent requeſt, it is becauſe I cannot be certain of it yet; however, I can anſwer you, that, before ten days from this, I ſhall have the unfeigned delight of ſeeing my ſweet girl.

I cannot help being angry with you for ſuch an ungenerous and impious wiſh, as you make in your laſt letter. What advantage could poſſibly accrue to me, from your death, who, as I ſaid before, only intend, nay, only wiſh or deſire, and am only capable of happineſs through your means? How have I *undeſerved* from you, or what merits have thoſe perſons you ſo falſely ſtile my friends, toward you, that their ſatisfaction is ſo unkindly and unwarrantably preferred before mine? What comfort could they afford me, for your loſs? or where elſe could I expect to find it? It is too late in life for me to begin the world anew: My habits are grown too ſtrong to be counteracted now: What a turn muſt my whole ſet of ideas take! and how many refined pleaſures muſt I *unlearn*, or loſe the reliſh of, before I could be ſatisfied with the enjoy-

enjoyment of any other woman! I have often quarrelled with you, upon ſuch ſubjects, and take it very unkindly that you will not recollect yourſelf a little, before you treat me with ſo much ingratitude and ungeneroſity. Indeed *I* is angry with *U*, in ſpight of all the letters of the alphabet, from Alpha to Omega; which is the order your dear idea preſents itſelf to my thoughts in. Repent, thou ſuicide and homicide in one!

Remember to write to me by Tueſday's poſt, directed to Caſhell, and on Thurſday direct to me at Callen, which is my way home. I will not excuſe you theſe two poſts, becauſe I ſhall want your company on the road.

Adieu, my treaſure! for, by a turn upon the words of ſcripture, I may call you ſo, as my heart is with you.

HENRY.

LETTER CCXII.

THE ſincere pleaſure I received from my dear Harry's laſt letter is, indeed, ſufficient to make me wiſh for life, nay, a long one, to enable me to repay his generous tenderneſs. Believe me, my ſweet love, your kindneſs is not thrown away; for all the poor return, which I can make, is moſt ſincerely your's, in thought, in word, in deed:—And, if I really am ſo bleſt, as to contribute to your happineſs, well may you call me ungenerous and ungrateful, for wiſhing to exchange that bliſs, even for the joys of immortality. The tranſport, which I feel, from thinking I am dear to you, is much too great to be expreſſed. I am, I ever will be your's: diſpoſe my life, my being, as you pleaſe: Thou art the lord of me.—Haſte then, thou dear author of my happineſs, haſte to complete

plete it by thy much-loved, much-longed for preſence!

I am ſtill une pauvre ſolitaire; and look upon myſelf to be the trueſt female recluſe, that ever was; as my confinement, ſolitude, and faſting, are dictated by choice, not neceſſity:—yet I am afraid this voluntary reſtraint is not founded in reaſon, or virtue. My moderation may be compared to that of an epicure, who, though he may have a good appetite, eats ſparingly of a coarſe dinner; but provide him with delicacies, and he ſhews the glutton. So I go ſeldom abroad, ſee no company at home, never think of public diverſions, and paſs my life in a ſtate of indifference to the objects which are within my reach; but, were it in my power to enjoy the feaſt of reaſon, in thy converſe, I ſhould quickly loſe the appearance of ſelf-denial, and gladly indulge myſelf in the extreme enjoyment of the higheſt pleaſures—thoſe of ſeeing, hearing, loving, and being loved by thee.

Adieu!

FRANCES.

HIATUS.

LETTER CCXIII.

My ſweeteſt, dear girl,

I AM at a loſs for epithets fond or expreſſive enough to addreſs you with; but muſt refer myſelf to the intuition of angelic minds, to ſhew you how far ſhort the warmeſt terms of human language fall of that ſincere affection and tender love I bear you.

I am ſurpriſed at the weakneſs of your concern upon my mentioning my dying; for ſurely a man is not the nearer, though he may be the better

pre-

prepared for it, by his making a will; nay, even the very approach of it ought to alarm us no more, than it ſhould a fond parent, that his child was growing taller; for death, in the philoſophy of a man, or the hope of a chriſtian, is to be conſidered, not as a change of our ſtate, but an improvement of it *. However, I will indulge your tenderneſs ſo far, as to ſpeak no more upon this head; but am pleaſed to find I am even with you, for ſome unkind hints, much ſtronger than mine, upon this ſubject, in one of your late letters.

I have been to ſee the large manufacture at † Waterford, as I have engaged in the ſame; and it has given me great ſatisfaction; though it would make any one, of leſs ſpirit than myſelf, deſpair of bringing ſo vaſt a work to perfection, from the complexed machinery, various buſineſs, intenſe application, and large ſums of money, and credit, which are neceſſary to carry it on; yet, believe me, that every difficulty, which occurred, has but ſtrengthened my reſolution to purſue it. It would ſurprize and ſtartle your philoſophy, at the ſame time, to ſee ſo many different machines performing the parts of rational agents, and requiring no farther aſſiſtance from man, than to ſet them in motion, and to preſerve their courſes regular, which is no more than what often man from man requires, as patients from phyſicians: Nay, ſome of them, like a perſon in health, perform their parts by the mere help of the elements only; and, if the ſole difference between theſe and animals be, that the firſt regularly labours to purſue the deſign of it's formation, while the other, through caprice, is capable of diſappointing the ends of it's creation,

* Plotinus ſaid, that the gods made the life of man mortal, out of mercy.

† Smyth's linen manufactures.

I do

I do not think that living creatures have much to boaſt of, in the ſuperiority of their mechaniſm. Man, indeed, as exerciſed in the contemplation of truth, beauty, harmony, and order, and employed in the practice of virtue, morality, and religion, is, in reality, a noble and exalted creature; but the many headed monſter, the vulgar herd, who are inſenſible to theſe great advantages, I take to be more imperfect inſtruments, than a windmill or a loom.

Adieu! Adieu!

HIATUS.

LETTER CCXIV.

Dear FANNY,

YOU deſired to hear from me on Wedneſday; but you may ſee my impatience, in writing to you a poſt ſooner.

I had a very direct and obſtinate wind in my face, all the day, and very diſagreeable weather of rain and hail; however I jogged on hither, to ſhew that neither wind or weather ſhould get the better of me. I ſuffered greatly from the cholic; but chewed rhubarb all the way. Mutton chops was the word; and now your health goes round; which is a juſt manner of ſpeaking, as I pledge myſelf to that toaſt, every glaſs.

I direct this to * India, becauſe I know you are to dine there to-morrow, and might be from home, before the poſt reached your lodgings. My love to the company; and remember that the council of ſix is ſtill complete, as I have left my deputy with you: ſo obſerve, that, upon every queſtion,

* The India Warehouſe.

you

you are to claim the right of a double voice, which is the ſame as if I were preſent; for I am ſure I ſhall never differ from you, in any opinion. "Her "taſte was his own."

Adieu!

LETTER CCXV.

FRANCES to HENRY.

HOW vaſtly am I indebted to that tenderneſs, which even prevents my deſires, and gratifies my fondeſt wiſh, before it is ſcarce formed! Indeed, thou deareſt, beſt of men, my heart is fruitful with a thouſand thoughts of gratitude and love to thee. Every moment recals ſome image of thy kindneſs to me, and fills my eyes with tears, more pleaſing than "the broadeſt mirth unfeeling folly "wears."

I felt every blaſt of the rude wind, that durſt oppoſe thee; and almoſt envied it the happineſs, it was inſenſible to, of kiſſing thy lips. Let me, my deareſt love, intreat you, by that regard you have for my health and happineſs, to take care of that, on which they both depend; and no longer trifle with the pain, which your preſent diſorder gives me. Remember, I have your promiſe to take emetics, if you do not find benefit from the rhubarb. Indeed, if you knew what I ſuffer from your illneſs, you would do every thing in your power to relieve me.

I ſhall take care of your dear little epitome, and hope, "* the full interpretation of time" will render it worthy of the commiſſion you have aſſigned it, and give me leave to ſay, that my ſincereſt

* Shakeſpeare's Coriolanus.

wiſh

wiſh is now, and ever ſhall be, to deſerve the compliment you make me.

The painter took away your picture, but it is no matter; ſince neither time nor abſence can efface the much more lively and more lovely one, that is painted on my heart.

I cannot help repeating my deſire of hearing from you, tho' I know it is needleſs; as I am ſure my dear Harry will do every thing to alleviate the otherwiſe inſupportable pains of abſence.

Adieu!

FRANCES.

HIATUS.

LETTER CCXVI.

Dear FANNY, *Caſtle Dermot.*

I HAVE ſet up here at the old inn; though you all ſay it is a bad one: this may be a reaſon for new gueſts not to come, but not for old ones to quit it. I always ſuppoſe, in ſuch caſes, that poverty is the reaſon of bad accommodations; and make it a ſort of charity, to ſupport the indigent; and, when I eat, or lie badly, it helps digeſtion, and ſoftens my repoſe, to conſider that others eat or ſleep the better for it. I made a vile breakfaſt at ———, this morning, from this turn of mind; though I had forſworn the old houſe, upon my going up to town laſt. Such reflections as theſe, my dear Fanny, are extremely pleaſant; and their being uncommon is, perhaps, one of the reaſons I amuſe myſelf with them.

I halted here, in order to write to ——, inſtead of paying him a viſit; for I do buſineſs better by proxy, than in perſon. The reaſon that I write better than I ſpeak, is not, as Dryden obſerves upon

upon Perſius, that I have a difficulty in finding a meaning; but rather, as the ſame critic remarks upon Juvenal, "car il eſt bon de ſe fair valoir," that it is hard to chuſe one. I have too much fancy, and am too nice about my expreſſion, to explain myſelf off hand diſtinctly and intelligibly. Beſides, the perſons and objects, which ſtrike on my eyes, throw me into a confuſion, which hinders my judgment from having fair play to exert itſelf. My ideas reſemble a painter's pallet, where you have great variety of colours lying together, without harmony or order; 'till a ſkilful pencil has blended them into proper lights and ſhades, to compoſe an agreeable picture. This difference between my writing and ſpeaking muſt be very obvious to you, with whom I have correſponded, almoſt conſtantly for above five years paſt: and, upon a review of my letters lately, I do not recollect to have repeated the ſame ſentiment twice; yet I remember to have ſaid the ſame words, in converſation, to you, an hundred times.

Every mile I rode, ſince I left town, my impatience to ſee Maidenhall has increaſed.—Perhaps, the affection, I have for it, being ſuſpended, while I was with you, (the greater paſſion abſorbing the leſs) was then ſet at liberty to operate, when we parted; or, perhaps, the thoughts of quitting, as is natural in ſoft minds, have the more attendered me toward it. If I thought there was a Naiad or Dryad in the place, who would lament my abſence, I ſhould ſacrifice my intereſt to my ſuperſtition; but my religion teaching me, that, wherever we go, our guardian angel accompanies us, I think I but obey its call, whenever I change my ſituation to my advantage.

I would have you, by all means, write to Lady O——. You may alſo preſent my *duty* to her, as ſhe is to you a *mother*.

Adieu, my life! my double life now!

LETTER CCXVII.

I BELIEVE, I need not take much pains to aſſure my dear Harry, that nothing, but a very ſevere illneſs, could have prevented my writing laſt poſt. However, I hope his own thoughts furniſhed him with ſome other cauſe for my ſilence; and that he had not the leaſt apprehenſion of the terrible ſituation, his poor Fanny was in. I was ſeized with a contraction in my ſtomach on Wedneſday morning, attended with an unuſual pain; but, as I had intervals of eaſe, I hoped it would go off. I dreſſed myſelf, in order to go to ——; but, finding myſelf grow worſe every hour, I was, at laſt, obliged to ſend an apology. The pain threw me into perfect convulſions; and, in ſpite of all the medicines which were given me, I continued on the rack 'till Friday morning, when a violent emetic gave me eaſe. I am now free from pain, but ſo extremely weak, that I cannot walk from my bed to the dining-room, without help. Even in thoſe moments, which I thought my laſt, I rejoiced you were not with me; as your ſufferings would have added to mine, and made them more than I could bear. Beſides, I ſhould not have had any thing to ſtruggle for, had you been preſent; but the earneſt deſire, I have again to ſee thee, gave me ſtrength to encounter thoſe agonies, that would have torn me from thee, my more than life! I would not let Tom write to acquaint you with

my

my illneſs, leſt your apprehenſion ſhould ſuggeſt ſomething even worſe than the reality.

I now congratulate you on my recovery, and ſhall proceed to thank my ſweet Harry for both his letters.

There is, doubtleſs, ſomething inexpreſſibly charming in reflecting on thoſe exerciſes of humanity, which my dear practic philoſopher is ſo conſtantly employed in: but, with regard to the two recent inſtances you mention, I cannot help thinking, that it is rather doing a general injury, than a particular charity, to ſupport perſons in any profeſſion, which their want of capacity, induſtry or a proper fund, renders them unfit for: theſe perſons, ſo diſqualified, prevent others, who may be capable from engaging in that buſineſs, which they do not execute; while themſelves might become uſeful members of ſociety in another ſituation. You may, perhaps, think this way of arguing too ſevere: but, were we not to regard the general good more than that of individuals, the tenderneſs of our diſpoſitions might impel us to acts of the higheſt injuſtice, and lead us, perhaps, to the reſcue of a murderer; if we did not reflect on the ſalutary effects, which examples produce, in the general community. But, while I talk with ſuch ſeeming ſtrictneſs, my heart and pen diſagree; and an inward conſciouſneſs of the many failings, I am incident to, ſtrongly reminds me of the mutual claim, which every part of the creation has to each other's indulgence; and, perhaps, none has more need of it, than my poor, faulty, helpleſs ſelf.

I can very eaſily account for your being able to write in a more clear and diſtinct manner, than you ſpeak: for, beſides the confuſion of ideas, which you have found ſo juſt and pretty a reſemblance for, you have, probably, more modeſty than any man, who has lived ſo long, and been ſo

converſant with the world, as you have; and I am ſure there are men, who are not poſſeſſed of the thouſandth part of your underſtanding or knowledge, who could make a better figure in a general converſation.

" Diſtruſtful ſenſe with modeſt caution ſpeaks,
" While flutt'ring nonſenſe in full vollies breaks.

You expreſs much reluctance at parting with the child of your fancy; and I will allow your attachment too to be a reaſonable one: but, like good reaſon, let it give way to better; and remember, " Your home is every-where." I am, perhaps, partial to this new ſcheme, as I firſt mentioned it; for this, if for no other reaſon, you cannot condemn me for deſiring its ſucceſs, as my utmoſt wiſh has ever been to become, in ſome ſhape or other, the means of good to thee. Let me then, my ſweet love, flatter myſelf, that, in this affair, I was the agent to thy guardian-angel, and pointed out the road to thy future advantage. But I will not inforce the ſubject farther, as I am ſure you will do every thing, which ſenſe and prudence direct.

Health, peace, and competence attend my love!

FRANCES.

LETTER CCXVIII.

My deareſt FANNY,

YOU have made but a more cruel apology for your ſilence laſt poſt, than that ſilence itſelf. You cannot imagine what anxiety I went through, in reading your letter. You, indeed, I apprehended, was well and ſafe, from your writing; but I expected a *lapſus linguæ* at every line. The remedy I knew to be pleaſant, but the delay of the

the cure intolerably tedious. I am not ſo fond of this life, as to deſire to renew my age; but I ſhould wiſh moſt ardently to revive it in my poſterity.

I muſt inſiſt upon it, that, 'till I ſee you again, which ſhall be the ſooner for your compliance with this requeſt, you are in bed, every night, by eleven o'clock,—as much ſooner, as you pleaſe; and up at eight,—as much earlier, as you will; and that, in every other particular, you will live, as we ſhould do together, alone at Maidenhall, or whatever place we may hereafter ſpend and enjoy our lives together in.

There is ſomething very juſt in your remarks upon my partial humanity: but I remember to have obſerved ſomewhat to you lately, upon this ſubject,

" Beyond the fix'd and ſettled rules
" Of vice and virtue in the ſchools," &c.

This diſpute between us puts me in mind of a parallel difference between Swift and Pope, in their letters to each other; but, though we ſometimes argue on different ſides of the queſtion, I am ſatisfied we ſhall always agree in acting the ſame way.

I have not mentioned a word to my own family of my correſpondence with ——; nor ſhall I, 'till it is finiſhed. I muſt now ſhorten my letter to you, that I may have time to lengthen one to him; the copy of which I deſign to ſend you, and deſire you will return it to me.

Your's, your's, your's.

LETTER CCXIX.

AND ſo, Sir, your chief concern was for Bab! indeed, Bab's mam is affronted; though I may venture to aſſure you, ſhe was more anxious for it, than herſelf. I have as little fondneſs for life, as moſt people; nor is there "a ſingle hour "o'erpaſſed, that I could wiſh ſhould take its "turn again:" yet I acknowledge the ſame deſire, which you expreſs; and, I am perſuaded, feel it infinitely ſtronger, than you can do, at preſent. There is the ſame kind of difference in our attachment to the dear little one, as in our affection for each other. You were the firſt and only object of my love: for you I felt all the romantic tenderneſs of a firſt paſſion; while you, who had loved much and many, were utterly inſenſible to all the ſoft inquietudes, the endearing anguiſh, the heart-rending fears, which Providence, in mercy to mankind, decreed ſhould never be re-felt.

I am to be ſent to bed at eleven o clock, and made to get up at eight, for Bab's ſake, and theſe are the conditions, you annex to your coming. Indeed, my ſweet love, I will comply with them, or any other command of your's, not grudgingly, nor of neceſſity, but with the utmoſt chearfulneſs; as it ſhall always be my higheſt pride to love, honour and obey thee, my guide, guardian, kinſman, father, friend.

I ſhould, indeed, be vaſtly aſhamed of myſelf, did I argue againſt your ſentiments, from my own: but as you firſt enter on thoſe ſubjects, you leave me only the wrong ſide of the argument; which I ſometimes take up, for the pleaſure of being fully confirmed in the right, by you. With regard to the late matter in queſtion, you may be thoroughly aſſured, that both our ways of thinking and acting

will

will ever be the ſame; for I hope, and believe, I have as much humanity in my diſpoſition, as any perſon I ever knew, except yourſelf. Did I not love you extremely, I ſhould envy your ſuperiority there, and there alone.

Rejoice with me! I have had two whole days ſacred to peace and contemplation—But they are over, and noiſe and folly re-aſſume their throne.

I know not what I am now writing, for the hurricane is begun. Oh, for a little nutſhell of my own!

I rejoice in this fine weather, becauſe you enjoy it; though I cannot help lamenting my own confinement, doubly uneaſy from the diſagreeableneſs of my companion. But I will bear it patiently, in hopes of happier days; days ſpent with thee. When, oh! when will that time come?

Adieu, my deareſt life! I am, and ever ſhall be, your's,

FRANCES.

LETTER CCXX.

AND ſo, Madam, you are jealous of Bab, are you? I have known ſuch inſtances with regard to dead rivals, but none before of objects, not yet in being. However, I ſhall allow you ſome foundation for your jealouſy here; for, if any thing ever rivals you, it muſt be ſome new perfection of your's; for nothing can excel you, but what is derived from you. Prior makes but a lame compliment to his miſtreſs, "I'll love thee *o'er again* in age;" for this hints rather a revival, than a continuance of his paſſion: but I ſay, I will love thee o'er in youth; which ſhews a conſtancy of the

ſame affection, and I hope I may conclude with an alluſion to the lines upon the Spectator,

" 'Tis the ſame ſun, and does itſelf ſucceed."

LETTER CCXXI.

Belmont.

I HAVE ſuffered my affairs to run into great confuſion, by my two laſt journies to Dublin; for I have not been here theſe four months. I have been at a vaſt expence, and nothing done as I directed.——How much I want the ſweet ſupport of your charming converſe, at preſent, to aſſiſt me, at once, from ſpleen and labour! two things, which never at the ſame time afflicted any perſon, who was not as whimſically compounded, as myſelf.

However, I have brought my favourite Montaigne with me, for I dare not truſt myſelf alone; and, tho' I am enamoured of ſolitude, yet I never retire, but in order to chuſe my company; which I cannot always do, when I live in the world. Some Dramatis Perſona ſays, " Death is the being born " to Plato's and to Cæſar's." Then ſurely a philoſophical ſolitude is to live with them. There is this flattering difference between the world and a library, that there you are ſubject to every fool's humour, here you can make every wit ſubject to your's. It is ſaid, that a man muſt be a God, or a brute, who can live alone: Be it ſo! but ſurely the contemplation of virtue, truth, and nature, being the higheſt entertainment of angels, may enable a philoſophick mind to ſupport retirement, without hanging, or drowning. Mere ſolitude, or even the moſt learned leiſure, is ſaid to unqualify a man

a man for the commerce, or even the converſation of the world; and perhaps it does;—but this objection is only from them to you, not from you to yourſelf. Dancing may be a neceſſary accompliſhment for the ſtage, but why ſhall a man practiſe coupees, who only means to walk? Such hints as theſe ſhould make a virtuous mind the more enamoured of fields and groves; for ſure it is a high recommendation of truth and honeſty, that the firſt would diſappoint a courtier's preferment, and the latter marr an attorney's fortune.

I read over a long chapter in Montaigne yeſterday, abſurdly ſtiled, *of cruelty*; for the ſubject is intirely on virtue. I think this eſſay by much the beſt of all his works, and well worth frequent reading. I don't know whether any thing, he has ſaid, is the occaſion of this obſervation occurring to me, but I have often thought, that the writers both upon religion, and morality, have ſaid enough about virtue and vice; yet have not ſufficiently diſtinguiſhed between vice and vice; which would be a more uſeful criticiſm, as leſs obvious. I am really afraid that ſome of the works of our learned divines have hardened more people thro' deſpair, than ever they reclaimed by repentance; proceeding too much upon a literal conſtruction of that text, "He who is guilty of the breach of any part "of the law, is guilty of the whole." Which is a doctrine as ſevere againſt God, as againſt man.—For, then, who was born to be ſaved? My opinion is, that, as there is no vice, which the frailty of human nature may not be led into; ſo there is no crime, which the divine nature will not pardon, and the moſt irreligious crime is the deſpairing of that pardon. The chriſtian religion goes hand in hand with the weakneſs of human nature; and the very doctrine of repentance, without which no man can be perfect, ſuppoſes us to have erred.

Chriſt was a pattern given us to imitate, not to equal. However, when our ſaviour wiſhes the bitter cup to paſs by him, and makes that frail ejaculation, *Eli, Eli, lama ſabacthani!* he ſeems to ſuffer with more weakneſs, than many mortals have betrayed in death or torments. But ſurely this was to abate the vain-glory of Stoiciſm, to humble the pride of ſelf-ſufficiency, and to ſhew us that God, who made us, as we are, indulges human weakneſſes even in the moſt perfect man.

Farewel, my charming ſinner! and I wiſh I had half your virtues to atone for even all my frailties.

Your's, No Saint.

HIATUS.

LETTER CCXXII.

My dear FANNY, *Belmont.*

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What I meant to take notice of in your letters was, to reprimand you for even ſuppoſing it poſſible I ſhould ever ceaſe to love you. This ſubject, which you too often enter upon, always alarms me; for, if ever I ſhould love you leſs, it muſt be owing to yourſelf. I aſſure you, that it never once enters into my head, but when you mention it; and, upon ſuch occaſions, I naturally reflect upon every circumſtance, in our paſt, preſent, and future lives, which might poſſibly effect ſuch a change; which is, by no means, a healthful contemplation. On the contrary, when my thoughts and reflections are left to my own guidance, I direct them

them to your converſation, to your letters, to your kindneſs to, and confidence in me: I compare you to any other woman, and, taking you all in all, give you your advantage. I beg leave to put you in mind, that this is not the firſt time, by many, that I have warned you againſt this indiſcretion; but your wit does not always give way to your ſenſe;

"And, when we graſp the happineſs we wiſh,
"We call on wit to argue it away."

I have taken a great deal of pains, well rewarded, to gain your love; but have taken a great deal more, to teach you how to preſerve mine. That my happineſs depended upon it, was not ſo ſtrong a reaſon to me, as that I believed your's reſted upon the ſame foundation: and I have been always more your friend than your lover; not by exerting the firſt character, which my ſenſe and reaſon ſufficiently inclined me to; but by reſtraining the latter, which my heart ſo ſtrongly impelled me to: and my beſt love, my firſt, my laſt, my only love, ſhall always find the exerciſe of both theſe characters exerted toward her, while there is one quality, in her charming compoſition, which can be the proper ſubject of either; or, rather, ſhe is very near being that clever creature, which is capable of happily blending both theſe affections in one; for which nothing more is neceſſary, but to uſe that underſtanding, upon all occaſions, which you are capable of exerting upon ſome: nor did I mean to be ridiculous, when I ſaid you ſhould not comb your head, or call a coach, without conſulting it; for you cannot imagine to what mean and trifling offices good ſenſe will condeſcend to accompany us; and, perhaps, it is in what the world eſteem trifles, that a good underſtanding

ſhould moſt employ itſelf; for great or extraordinary occaſions generally direct their own operations.

HENRY.

P. S. There is a * gentleman in the houſe where I am, at preſent, who has lately read his recantation, in order to preſerve an eſtate of about 70 l. per annum. He has a brother at Bourdeaux, who is a beneficed prieſt, from whom he received a letter this morning, ſo full of fire and brimſtone, that it had almoſt thrown him into a fit of deſpair: but I had the good fortune to quiet his mind, after a quarter of an hour's converſation; and he begged I would reduce my reaſoning upon this ſubject, into the form of a letter, which he would copy, and ſend to his brother. I did ſo; and, as he has juſt done with it, I ſend you the original, incloſed.

Dear Brother,

I Received your religious exhortation, and brotherly admonition, which I muſt acknowledge to be in the ſtile of a prieſt, but not in the ſpirit of a chriſtian; both for the ſame reaſon, that it ſo boldly and ignorantly denounces damnation againſt thoſe, who differ from you in controverted opinions and forms, even though, in eſſentials, you ſhould both agree; as if the God of the univerſe was but a king of one nation of men, and declared war againſt all thoſe, who refuſed to ſubmit to the ſame policy. This I ſpeak, in general, with regard to the uncharitable ſentiments of the whole body of chriſtians, againſt the profeſſors of every other worſhip, in the reſt of the world. But, as

* Edmund Kavanagh.

to the points in queſtion between you and me, let me fairly ſtate the caſe between us.

We believe and adore the ſame God, and have the ſame faith in the Trinity: we alſo obſerve the ſame principles of morality, hinted firſt to the antient philoſophers by the light of reaſon, and afterwards more fully illuſtrated, and made obvious to the meaner capacities, by the divine grace of revelation. We both derive our doctrines from the ſame text of holy writ, and are, therefore, both, of the one only true and univerſal church.

The only difference, then, between us, is, that in the infancy of chriſtianity, making it's way through the errors of Judaiſm and Heatheniſm, it neceſſarily contracted a great deal of the foulneſs of ſuperſtition in it's paſſage, and grew up incumbered with many idle forms, and uſeleſs and abſurd ceremonies, which are by no means authorized from ſcripture. There was likewiſe a good deal of time-ſerving in the firſt preachers after the apoſtles; for they were but men, and the grace of inſpiration ceaſed with the apoſtles. Theſe men, then, finding it impoſſible to propagate this new faith, pure and intire, againſt the ſuperſtitious prejudices of antient and eſtabliſhed modes of worſhip, at leaſt with that diſpatch which their zeal required, temporized with the ceremonies and idolatries of the nations round them, in order to be the better received among them. They thought, perhaps, that, as this religion was firſt eſtabliſhed by the power of miracles, it muſt be maintained ſo; and then introduced that abſurd and unphiloſophical doctrine of tranſubſtantiation. They thought too, that to give men hopes of a redemption, even after death, and by the merit of another's devotion, would naturally allure them to the embracing this new faith; and ſo publiſhed the doctrine of ſupererogation, which unluckily contradicts another,

broached at the ſame time, of purgatory, in the moſt expreſs manner; as the laſt ſuppoſes, that no perſon can be virtuous or religious enough to ſave his ſoul intire, before he dies, therefore muſt neceſſarily paſs through a purgation; and the other ſuppoſes, that a man may not only perform ſufficient acts to ſecure himſelf, but the overplus of his merits may go toward the ſalvation of another. This contradiction puts me in mind of the old ſaying, that "Liars ſhould have good memories." Now you are drinking from the polluted ſtream, while we have recurred up to the pure fountain, and original ſource. Our religion is deduced from the plain text of the ſcriptures, your's from the ſophiſtical comments of the prieſts. When a prieſt once aſked a proteſtant, where his religion was before Luther, he anſwered humouroufly, but not leſs juſtly, by aſking him, where was his face before it was waſhed?

As for your doctrine of ſeven ſacraments, which you ſay we are deficient in, I anſwer, that we receive the eſſence of them all in our two; and the fewer heads any propoſition is divided into, the leſs confuſion there will be in the comprehenſion of it.

In ſhort, you ſeem to have more of the ſubtilties of the ſchools, in your reaſoning, than the purity of religion, which, the more ſimple it is, is the more divine.

What you ſay, with regard to the ſaints, martyrs, virgins, &c. is not only idolatry, in general, but that particular ſpecies of it imbibed by the church with it's nurſe's milk; for the aſſigning ſeparate charges to them, over nations, trades, diſtempers, perils by land and water, &c. is the ſame error among Roman catholics, which theologicians attribute to the heathen Romans, who are ſaid to have

have worſhipped the only true God, but miſtook every attribute for a diſtinct deity.

I ſhall trouble you no farther now, upon theſe ſubjects; but conclude, that, if religion be your trade, I would have you ſtick to it; for a better you cannot get, for that purpoſe: but, if it is your ſcience, quit it for a more virtuous and rational one, and you can hardly go amiſs. I am, in true chriſtian charity,

Dear Brother,

Your's, &c.

E. K.

HIATUS.

LETTER CCXXIII.

Racoole.

THE heat of the day, and the coolneſs of my unperforming nag, obliged me to ſtop here to dinner. When the ſun's ſtrength declines, and my horſe recovers his, I ſhall make a deſperate puſh for Caſtle-Dermot.

Among the parcel of looſe papers, which I put into my pocket, for amuſement on the road, I find the incloſed letter from Oliver Cromwell to his wife; which I ſend you, as part of a comment upon Hudibras, which I left you reading. You may obſerve, from this letter, the hypocritical and fanatic ſtile of the leading men at that æra, which will give you light into the characters of knight and 'ſquire.

Though it is but three hours ſince we parted, I found I could not eat my dinner without writing to you; for my love is ſtronger than my hunger. The eagerneſs of appetite ſometimes makes me omit a grace,

a grace, and ſleep too often inclines me to neglect a prayer at night; but at bed, or board, I never forget to think of you, or ceaſe to wiſh you, moſt earneſtly, a participation of ſuch entertainment, as I can afford you at either.

I ſhall call at ——, in my road, this evening; where I expect to find the good lady in ſuch a condition, "as is her cuſtom always in the afternoon."

There is ſomething remarkably odious in this vice in women, as cuſtom and education are againſt it, and that it has not even the excuſe of nature or temptation on it's ſide.

"When women err, let nature be their guide;
"Love has ſome ſoft excuſe for female pride."

For my part, I ſhould think the embraces of a harlot chaſter than the fondneſs of ſuch a wife.

What a ſhocking thing muſt it be to any woman's reflection, at a ſober interval, to think, that, by this vice, ſhe has rendered herſelf the ſubject of luſt, without being the object of deſire! For ſuch muſt be the conſequence, when paſſions are inflamed, while reaſon is extinct, and, as the wife of Bath ſays,

"There is a rule I never knew to fail," &c.

And what a dreadful ſituation muſt that unhappy man be in, who thinks he has no ſecurity over his wife's chaſtity, but the natural abhorrence which her vice creates! For, in ſuch a ſtate, one could only think her a fit paramour for an * incubus, which is a ſpecies of dæmon, that is reported to hold criminal commerce with dead bodies. But enough of this vile ſubject.

Adieu!

HENRY.

* Or Vampiere.

HIATUS.

LETTER CCXXIV.

My dearest FANNY,

I HAVE filled one letter so full of business, that I had not room to take notice of the pretty part of your last; but I shall not suffer the post to go out without a letter, intirely in answer to the refined scruples you hint at in your's.

Your love for me does not destroy your present happiness, but rather constitutes it. Those apprehensions, and that uneasiness, which sometimes afflict you, are not, indeed, part of your happiness, but are the natural consequence of it, in tender and delicate minds; for absence, or fear of losing, affects us always, in proportion to the height of our enjoyments. Now those who desire their pleasures to be less, in order to rid themselves of their pains, know not what they wish for: apathy is a wretched exchange, for fond sensations, even with all their incumbrances; and to prefer such an indolence of mind is, as if a man should refuse an estate, because it was subject to quit-rent.

As for your extraordinary notion, that perhaps your love and fondness for me may affect your happiness hereafter, this must be your own fault, and not the nature of the thing, if it should. The love of God, and the love of man, are very different things, and both made our express duties, by distinct commandments: therefore the latter cannot become a crime, of the nature you apprehend, even by it's excess; for parallel lines can never interfere, though extended infinitely: but the smallest portion of mortal love, or any other worldly affection, rises into a sin, when it intersects, or runs counter

counter to our love of God, the duties of religion, or the morals of virtue. Now there is nothing, ſurely, in our chaſte, ſincere, and conſtant regards, toward each other, which can poſſibly violate any of theſe high concerns; but rather ſtrengthen us in them, by inſpiring our hearts with the moſt grateful ſenſe, toward providence, and poſſeſſing our minds with the warmeſt devotion and thankſgiving, to the Almighty, for our mutual happineſs.

To a mind rightly formed, the paths of heaven are ſtrewn with roſes, not ſtuck with thorns:

* "For heaven is paid, when man receives;
"T'enjoy is to obey."

And the poſſeſſion of all the pleaſures of life, bounded by reaſon and religion, beyond which alone we taſte the bitterneſs of the draught, leads us not a ſtep out of the road to happineſs hereafter; referring every thing to God, hymning out his praiſe, and ſubmitting ourſelves implicitly, and humbly, to the juſtice, goodneſs, and wiſdom of the divine diſpenſations, whenever heaven ſhall think fit to withdraw any of it's *free gifts* from us.

As for the concern and unhappineſs we ſhall unavoidably feel upon the diſappointment or loſs of thoſe things, which our fond hearts are ſet upon here, you need not moralize ſo rigidly upon this ſubject; for this grief, like the ſighs and tears which are the conſequence of bodily pain, will be attributed by him who made us, to the weakneſs of that nature with which he was pleaſed to cloath our ſouls; and, in either caſe, it is not our feelings, but the repinings, impatience, or deſpondency, which create the crime.

* Part of Pope's Prayer.

You

You ſee I have here renewed the ſtrain of our former correſpondence; for I am always pleaſed to enter into ſubjects with you, whenever you give me an opportunity; and, if you would more frequently write to me, in ſuch a manner as your laſt letter, to ſhew the delicacy of your ſentiment, and the excellency of your heart, you would do yourſelf infinite ſervice, in the improvement of your own mind and virtue, in the ſecuring of my love and eſteem, and, at the ſame time, afford the moſt extreme pleaſure and pride to my deareſt Fanny's conſtant, ſincere, and fond huſband,

HENRY.

LETTER CCXXV.

My deareſt HARRY,

I THANK you for both your kind letters:—They are lively emblems of yourſelf; ſenſible philoſophic, affectionate, and polite.

I am always ſincerely pleaſed, when any little error or weakneſs of mine gives my ever dear preceptor an opportunity of ſetting his little pupil right: and the trouble you have taken, on this occaſion, is doubly kind; for, as all the preſent and paſt actions of your life, toward me, may fully juſtify the exceſs of my affection for you, another man might have thought it needleſs to ſatisfy the nice ſcruples of a weak or delicate mind; but thou, the dear diſpenſer of all heaven's bounty to me, has convinced me, that it is both my duty and happineſs, as well as it was my inclination, to indulge that tender, chaſte, and inviolable affection, which I feel for thee, thou moſt deſerving of thy ſex! nor would I change even thoſe pains thy abſence gives me, for the dull inſenſibility

ſenſibility in which the common race of mortals paſs their lives; though I confeſs theſe pains imbitter every hour of life; for even while you are with me, my thoughts are continually filled with the ſad idea of our parting;—and, indeed, it is dreadful to think of paſſing the morn of life, the ſeaſon for tender converſe, domeſtic happineſs, and ſocial joys, the remembrance of which ſhould gild the down hill path, the evening tide of life, in a ſtate of ſeparation from all we love! to have the fleeting days of youth paſs, like a dream, unmarked by any pleaſing æra, or intereſting event! not but I agree with Milton and Shaftſbury, that they know not their own intereſt, who wiſh never to be ſeparated from thoſe they truly love; "for "ſolitude is ſometimes beſt ſociety; and ſhort re-"tirement urges ſweet return." But mine is, I think, a perpetual ſtate of baniſhment; for the months you are from me appear like centuries, and the few days you are with me fly away like the moments of a dying man, who knows he has but one ſhort hour to live; or ſeem, at beſt, but like the wretched exile's interval of taking leave for life.

However, I will, henceforward, remember that happineſs is reſerved for immortality; and learn to conſider thoſe anxieties, which the tenderneſs of my affection ſometimes occaſions, as the purchaſe of that felicity, which it has, and I hope will ſtill continue to produce; I mean the redoubled joys of meeting.

What you ſay, with regard to the reſentment I expreſſed upon Tom's behaviour, is very juſt; but I own my nature is warm, and impatient of injuries, eſpecially when they are loaded with the vile weight of ingratitude; but, believe me, Harry, I have a heart as tender, and a hand as open to ſoft compaſſion, and to melting charity, even as your generous

generous ſelf; but I confeſs, with a kind of pride not to be deſcribed, that, in the ſtoical habitude of ſubduing the firſt impulſe of paſſion, and attending to the dictates of reaſon and humanity, you have, as in every thing elſe, a conſiderable advantage over me. You are, indeed, the ſteady *rack*, that keeps one even courſe, and I the unſettled cloud below, liable to the guſt of every varying wind, which veers it from its purpoſed bearing.

There is really ſomething ſingular in my affection for you, which makes me triumph at every mark of your ſuperiority in ſenſe or virtue, even over myſelf; and I feel a more exulting pleaſure at being excelled by you, than I ſhould in being ſuperior to all the world beſide. Perhaps this may be owing to my having placed my chief merit and happineſs in the tenderneſs and exceſs of my love, (and there alone I will not yield the prize, even to you;) and as every new proof of your worth confirms and juſtifies the ruling paſſion of my ſoul, I am doubly pleaſed and grateful for it.

I will not yet deſpair of your ſucceſs with your *petrified patronymic*; for I depend on your perſeverance; and conſtant dropping wears at length the *marble*: beſides, you find that the propoſal you made him, two months ago, has at laſt made its way, and penetrated into his moſt obdurate brain. So I take it for granted, that your laſt offer is travelling the ſame roundabout road, and may, in the ſame time, arrive, much fatigued with the tedious barrenneſs of the way, at the ſame inn; and truly I think an inn a proper ſimile for his brain, where neither ſenſe nor ſcience take up their reſt, where every thing paſſes in dull rotation, and leaves no more impreſſion than "the remembrance of a "gueſt, who tarrieth but a night." If I were Genii of the Black Iſles, mentioned in the Arabian tales,

tales, I would certainly take meaſure of him, with my wand, for a compleat ſuit of marble; his wig, at leaſt, ſhould "eternal buckle take in Parian "ſtone."

I ſhould have been glad to have known, from the oſſafied man, *which* I hear is depoſited in Dublin college, whether his mind partook of his body's diſorder, and if his heart grew hard in proportion as his nerves grew rigid; for if that be the caſe, I would have the gentleman, in queſtion, anointed with oils, like an Olympic Wreſtler; for indeed I believe an act of generoſity would be a gymnaſtic exerciſe to him; and I would have him put to ſleep in a tub of gooſe-greaſe, to increaſe his ſenſibility.

Forgive me, Harry, for making ſo free; but I think it is better to laugh than cry, at things which we cannot remedy; for I do not believe, what poor Lear makes a queſtion of, "that there is any "cauſe, or cure, in nature, for hard hearts."

Your obſervation, about Charles's uneaſineſs, at being ſeparated from his wife, is, I believe, very juſt; for I own I think him incapable of that delicate tenderneſs, which renders abſence painful; but it is very poſſible he may be uneaſy for the reaſons you aſſign; the difficulty of diſuſe, when men are governed more by habit than reaſon; the miſerable vacuum which this has left in his mind and time, and which he is at a loſs how to fill up, &c. for there is not, I believe, a more helpleſs mortal breathing, or one leſs qualified for ſolitude: His poor vague mind is neither imbued with religion or philoſophy, nor ſtored with ideas enough to entertain himſelf, or any one elſe, for half an hour; and, as he is generally much fatigued with buſineſs, and cannot read, he muſt neceſſarily fall aſleep, whenever he is left to himſelf; and ſuch a ſituation would make one regret the loſs of any ſort

of

of companion; therefore I heartily pity the poor man.

I ſhould be very unhappy, if I doubted the ſincerity of your laſt paragraph; but indeed I do not, for you have given me many kind proofs to illuſtrate it; and you may believe me, in return, when I aſſure you, that I would be content to give up half the duration of my life, to be certain of ſpending the remainder of it with you; which is, however, no great compliment; for all the time you are abſent, I conſider myſelf in a ſtate of annihilation, as I am deprived of the principal ſpring, or movement, which actuates this little machine; or, rather, like a clock, with the ſtriking weight taken off, which is ſilent, though the pendulum moves, and only expreſſes itſelf by the *hand*, as I do now: but, though I am dumb to every one elſe, I find, as you may have *long* ſince obſerved in this *long* letter, a vaſt inclination of prating away to you; and ſhould go on with this running pattern, without any ground, for an hour or two more, but that the piece of mechaniſm, I have been alluding to has luckily for you, juſt now informed me, that the Poſt-office will be ſhut in five minutes.

Adieu! Adieu!

FRANCES.

LETTER CCXXVI.

My deareſt FANNY, *Belmont.*

I SENT to the poſt yeſterday, but had no letter from you; which I ſhould have been extremely uneaſy at, but that Kitty ſent me one from you to her, which does not ſay you are worſe, though you ſtill complain. I came over here, juſt after I wrote laſt to you, and breakfaſted with Kitty in

my way. This was but the ſecond time I have ſeen her, ſince you left her; which ſhe ſeems picqued at, and complains that I am grown peeviſh; for ſhe is one of thoſe, who cannot diſtinguiſh between gravity and ill-humour, or knows any difference between reproof and ſcolding.

I enjoy as much ſolitude here, as I did lately at Maidenhall; and live after my own manner, which is, not to dine 'till night. I am more the hermit here too, which makes ſome variety; for I dreſs my own meals, broil my chops, and roaſt my potatoes, by my chamber fire; for I chuſe them clean; and they are but flatternly people, who rent this houſe from me, though they are Engliſh, and Proteſtants. I do aſſure you, my life, that I grudge myſelf every morſel I eat in this or any retirement, unenjoyed by thee; and would very chearfully faſt three days, for the pleaſure of your dining with me the fourth.

As I have a way of philoſophizing upon even the moſt trifling occaſions, I have begun to look upon epicuriſm in a very different light, from what I have always conſidered it. It is certain, that the epicure has a greater and more frequent enjoyment of life, than a man of vulgar appetite. I grant, that the reducing our wants to as few things as poſſible, has more of the philoſopher in it; but, perhaps, to multiply our pleaſures may be the more ſenſible ſcheme, within the bounds of reaſon and innocence. They, who argue againſt this voluptuouſneſs, may, from the ſame rule, prohibit a refined taſte for letters, painting, or muſic. But, though they ſhould indulge us a little in (what they call) rational pleaſures, they will find, that all their vain philoſophy againſt the enjoyments of ſenſe, is but a certain ſtoical pride, which would pretend to ſet human nature above any ſatisfaction, which they may have in common with brutes. I wonder,

wonder, they have not yet attempted to ſtop our breath and motion, becauſe brutes have both *.

I am, my deareſt life, while I have appetite, breath, or motion, your own rational brute.

* However, a perſon who has attended to this character, in hiſtory, may form this alarming reflection, that all the gluttons and epicures were, in other things, men of debauched and vicious morals, Claudius Heliogabalus, Caligula, Vitellius, Tiberius, Verus, Clodius the tragedian, &c. And on the other hand the moſt abſtemious men, were perſons of virtue and benevolence, Auguſtus, Paulus Æmilius, Alexander Severus, Epaminondas, Socrates, &c.

LETTER CCXXVII.

AS I know it will give my ſweet love pleaſure, I find a very ſincere one in being able to acquaint him, that I am vaſtly better, than when I wrote laſt. My cough is ſomewhat abated, and I have ſlept tolerably well theſe two nights.

I fancy, I live as retired, in the midſt of a great city, as you in your hermitage. I cook for myſelf, and drink (rather than eat) by myſelf; for I live entirely on broth, chocolate, and tea. I find, ſlops agree with me much better than meat; for I am ſurely ſick, if I touch it.

My wiſhes for you are not confined to meal-times, nor do I ſuppoſe your's are: No moment paſſes, but I ſigh for you: What do I ſuffer in being ſeparated from thee! When, when ſhall we meet, to part no more?

I am ſo far an epicurean, as to believe, that Providence deſigned a full and perfect uſe of all its bounties to his creature, man.

" For heav'n is paid, when man receives;
" T'enjoy, is to obey."

Elſe wherefore, with an unwithdrawing hand, did he create them? It is the abuſe of theſe, which conſtitutes the crime; and which, in general, bears its puniſhment in the very commiſſion of it.

" To the late revel, and protracted feaſt,
" Wild dreams ſucceeded, and diſorder'd reſt."

They, who indulge the gratification of any appetite to exceſs, are far below the brutes; and to debar ourſelves of any enjoyment, within the bounds of innocence and reaſon, is " to live like " nature's baſtards, not her ſons." Every perſon's particular circumſtances ought to fix the bounds of their ſelf-indulgence; for there are many gratifications, which would be criminal in me, that may be both reaſonable and innocent for a perſon, who has a large fortune. Were I miſtreſs of ten thouſand pounds a year, I would not wiſh to multiply my deſires, (which are now confined within a very narrow compaſs) becauſe, by not having many of my own, I might gratify others; which is to me the higheſt enjoyment human nature is capable of. There, indeed, we riſe ſuperior to the brute creation, who, I believe, have much the advantage in all ſenſual pleaſures; for theirs are unmoleſted with intemperance or remorſe. Yet I do not think this is a cauſe for us to ſpurn the rational enjoyment of thoſe pleaſures, we have in common with the animal world: let us rather follow their example in thoſe particulars, where we appear moſt on a level with them, by following, not oppreſſing nature; which is, in them, another name for (what we call) reaſon.

I have

I have been inſenſibly led into a ſubject, which, I am conſcious, I am by no means capable of treating juſtly: but you, I am ſure, will excuſe my errors on this and every other occaſion; as they proceed only from the weakneſs of my head, not badneſs of my heart; which is filled and guarded by your loved idea.

Adieu, my utmoſt wiſh, my fond deſire, and only hope! my Life, my Love, adieu!

LETTER CCXXVIII.

Dear FANNY,

YOU reproach me gallantly enough with only wiſhing for your company at board: but indeed, my love, I have one conſtant, equal earneſtneſs toward you, which is never broke through; except that I wiſh for your company with a more particular fondneſs upon ſome occaſions, when I happen to be in ſuch a ſituation, or romantic circumſtance, as I know would ſuit your taſte, or give you an additional reliſh to my company. Have you not ſometimes, during a conſtant tenor of health, perceived, at particular periods, a certain lightneſs of heart, and wantonneſs of fancy, which you could not account for? ſomewhat like the gleam of chearfulneſs in the mind, which is raiſed by the ſudden rays of ſunſhine, breaking through a cloud. Something analogous to this I am frequently ſenſible of toward you. My love is never leſs than health; but my fondneſs often riſes to an exceſs of ardor, equal to thoſe extraordinary ſpirits I am alluding to: and, as theſe flights of the ſoul ſeem to be its eſſays towards a more perfect ſtate, I may be ſaid to love you, in general, like a man; but, upon ſuch extraordinary occaſions, to adore you with the fervor of an angel.

I am extremely pleaſed at the little eſſay, I led you into, upon the epicurean philoſophy; for, upon all ſuch occaſions, my dear little philoſopher acquits herſelf with juſtneſs of ſentiment, and elegance of expreſſion. I wiſh greatly, that you had leiſure to exert your ſtrength more frequently upon ſuch topics; for, believe no flatterer, you have a native force of mind, which, as ſome poet expreſſes it,

"Leaves puzzled learning lab'ring far behind."

Adieu, my Pleaſure!

LETTER CCXXIX.

My dear FANNY, *Maidenhall.*

I SEND you incloſed a letter, I had laſt poſt, from Tom; which is a great improvement to the uneaſy ſituation I am in at preſent, and likely to be farther involved in.

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I am, my deareſt Fanny, in theſe, and many circumſtances, too irkſome to trouble you with, extremely to be pitied. I find now the great benefit and bleſſing of that turn of mind, which I have, for theſe two years paſt, endeavoured to cultivate in myſelf; to prevent the conſequences of a very warm, violent, and precipitate diſpoſition of temper, which I was born with, and indulged in too much, during the former part of my life. It is not, when misfortunes come upon us, the time to ſet about the philoſophy of bearing, or the reſignation of ſubmitting to them: It is in health we ſhould prepare ourſelves againſt ſick-

neſs,

neſs, or the invalid may find his couch his grave.*

I have brought a very ſevere cold from Belmont, which breaks in upon my ſcheme of ſolitude, as it confines me entirely within doors. It has not yet made any attack upon my throat, which is all the danger I ever apprehend from that diſorder.

Adieu, my Life, my Love!

* Ad opinionem dolemus; tam miſer eſt quiſque quam credit. SEN.

HIATUS.

LETTER CCXXX.

My deareſt, ſick love,

I AM particularly concerned at your cough; for it is the worſt ſymptom of a cold, and what your ſlight conſtitution, inclined to an hectic and decay, is very little able to bear. My love to the India folk, becauſe you ſay they have been very kind and affectionate to you.

I am diſpleaſed at your ſaying, you are weary of life: It is, at leaſt, unkind, if not ſomething worſe: It is the ſign of a lowneſs of ſpirits, and a careleſſneſs; which is much below your ſenſe, virtue, or religion. I cannot excuſe any one for ſpeaking without thought, who is capable of thinking ſo well. It was ſaid by one of the ancients, "that a patient reſignation to neceſſary evils was "next to the merit of a voluntary martyrdom." This was a fine ſaying in the days of ſuperſtitious enthuſiaſm, when men officiouſly threw themſelves in the way of perſecution, in order to merit the eighth beatitude; but, at preſent, the firſt virtue,

mentioned above, ſtands unrivalled. Let men repine at what misfortune they will, it will be found, upon examination, that their loſs of patience is the greateſt evil they labour under. The abſurd notion of natural right to the good things of this life, occaſions our uneaſineſs at their loſs; but conſider matters philoſophically or religiouſly, and all the concern vaniſhes. We cannot challenge a property in any thing, from Providence, in this life; for we were not in a condition to make terms for ourſelves, before we came into it; but we ſhould conſider ourſelves here, in an happy ſtate of eſtabliſhing an indefeaſible right to the higheſt enjoyments of the next. Neither health or fortune we can call our own, where every thing fluctuates inceſſantly; and, if our furniture be glaſs, why ſhould we be ſurprized at its being broken *? And it is as vain and ridiculous to grieve at any loſs of worldly advantage, as it would be to be mortified, becauſe

"The very air, you breathe this day,
"The next may help an aſs to bray." †

Which is the only diſtich, I remember, of a poem, I wrote, ſome years ago, upon this very ſubject.

Now obſerve, ma ſeule, et chere mignonne, that I am not ſcolding, but only philoſophizing; which being premiſed, I ſhall go on with an obſervation I have made, long ſince, upon one of the beatitudes; I forget which, in order; but the text is, 'Bleſſed "are the poor in ſpirit," &c. Here is, methinks, an inſtance, among many, of the difference between the chriſtian and heathen philoſophy; which ſome authors, vain of the natural reaſon of man,

* Vitrea vita fluor.

† Qui recuſat ferre caſus humanos, ſive plebeii ſumus, ſive reges, is e vita migret oportet. ERAS.

have

have affirmed to be the ſame. The latter teaches us contempt for riches, and fortitude in misfortunes: but the former inſpires us with a reſignation to poverty, and patience under ſufferings. One but increaſes the ſavage fierceneſs of man's nature into a pride and ſtoiciſm above it: The other ſoftens us into a ſpirit of humility and meekneſs, not below, but conſonant to, the imperfect ſtate of man in this life. While men, either before, or during their ignorance of, revelation, conſidered themſelves only with regard to this life, perhaps the heroiſm of ſtoic philoſophy might ſufficiently anſwer the purpoſes of human nature, in this confined view: but of what uſe are virtues, ſentiments, or affections, cultivated here, which can never be exerted in that ſtate, where there will be no pomps fit to contemn, or misfortunes to oblige us to ſuffer? while the ſpirit of meekneſs and humility will ſufficiently anſwer our ends here, and is the proper temper to prepare us for the enjoyment of love, and contemplation, which are the occupations of *the bleſt above*.

As your cold has probably taken away what little appetite you had, I ſhall ſend you up, by Thurſday's ſtage, a crock of the fineſt pickled walnuts, you ever ſaw or taſted. I wiſh I could ſend you ſome of my mutton, as little, and as ſweet, (but ſomewhat fatter) as yourſelf. My hams, however, will ſoon come, and I ſhall carry up ſome of them for you.—Sweet, good night!—

Take notice, that I always kiſs my letters going to you, as I do thoſe I receive from you; and have juſt put my lips to the expreſſion, "the bleſt above," thy ſole ſuperiors.

HENRY.

LETTER CCXXXI.

FRANCES to HENRY.

My deareſt Life,

AMIDST the noiſe and impertinence, I am at preſent ſurrounded with, I am indeed utterly incapable of anſwering your very elegant treatiſe; but incumbered as I am with multitudes, I can love and thank you for it. Indeed, my ſweet love, you can reconcile me to any misfortune, but your abſence; for, while you prove, from philoſophy and religion, the trifling *value*, we ought to ſet on what are called the good things of this life, you ſtill inhance your *own*. My love, my friendſhip, my eſteem, ſeem to increaſe daily, though it is long ſince I thought I had arrived at the higheſt degree of each, for thee, my life, my love!

I thank you for your intended preſent: I doubt not their being excellent; but, alas! unſhared by thee, what delicacy can pleaſe? Haſte then, my love, to give me a reliſh for every enjoyment; for I neither know, wiſh, nor hope for any, but in thee.

While I preſſed the dear ſpot, which thou hadſt bleſſed with the impreſſion of thy lips, I found a joy, which might indeed be felt even by angelic natures; unmixed with any paſſion, that might diſgrace an angel; my ſoul ſeemed ready to iſſue at my lips, in hopes of meeting thine. None, but thoſe who love like you and me, can have an idea of ſuch pleaſures.

I have ſpent the day at your brother's, where there are a little hundred met to be merry: they pity my melancholy; for, indeed, I am not gay: but

but I feel a higher ſatisfaction, than the broadeſt mirth is capable of, in ſubſcribing myſelf, faithfully and affectionately,

Your's,

FRANCES.

LETTER CCXXXII.

HENRY to FRANCES.

I AM at a loſs to know, whether my love or pride is moſt gratified at your kind acceptance of thoſe little occaſional eſſays, which I ſometimes ſend you, for your amuſement, or guidance in life; but I ſhall refer the ſatisfaction to my love, as that comprehends my beſt and higheſt pride too. It is but juſt in me to make you ſome return of that philoſophy, which you have taught me: but in this ſcience you are infinitely my ſuperior; for I can but create in you a diſregard for the things ſtiled of this world, merely by ſhewing their trivialneſs and vanity in themſelves; but you have inſpired me with an utter contempt of them, by putting them in compariſon with your own worth. However, my philoſophy is neither of the cynic or miſanthrope kind: I have neither an averſion to men or things; for I can very well indulge myſelf with both; but then I conſider them like a dream or a feaſt, which ſerve as amuſements for the time, and leave either no longing, or a ſatiety, behind. Indeed, I take the true uſe of philoſophy to be, not to vex ourſelves in proſperity, but to comfort us in adverſity. In ſhort, we need not be ſo rigidly on our guard againſt the pleaſures of this life; for they ſeldom happen, or continue long enough to ſoften or emaſculate our natures: but diſappoint-

ments or misfortunes are the things, which are moſt familiar to us; and yet, by our uneaſineſs, ſeem the things, which we are leaſt uſed to. Moſt of the mortifications, we complain of, are what we owe to one another; a great many of which may be avoided, if we juſtly conſidered men but as tools. An inſtrument, which has not ſharpneſs enough for a razor, may have ſtrength ſufficient for a paring-ſhovel; and that, which has not hardneſs for an hammer, may have proper weight for a mallet. Now, to inſtance in men: *G. F.* would make a miſerable confident; but, if you are to make an apology, he can tell an admirable lye for you. *J. S.* is not of ſtuff to make a friend, but nobody directs a coachman to *Chapel-Izod* better. *H. D.* indeed, cannot write letters; but ſure he can carry them to the poſt. *H. G.* would be but an indifferent comforter in affliction; but then he can make you laugh, and forget it. So that a tolerable judgment, upon the different characters of mankind, may help us to work ſome uſeful end, even out of the worſt and meaneſt: and, as to the evils and goods of life, a religious ſenſe of them will be found to be the only true philoſophic one—to conſider the firſt as a reprobation of our faults, and ſo amend; and the latter as a reward of our virtues, and ſo perſevere.

I took a ſolitary walk in my fields this evening, contemplating upon ſuch ſubjects as theſe; and think, I never obſerved a more beautiful weſtern ſky, at the ſetting of the ſun. This ſhall be the teſt with me, whether there be a true poetical genius in this iſland, at preſent; for ſuch a one muſt certainly, like Promotheus, catch fire at the ſun in ſo much glory: for no perſon can be eminent in this art, who has not a ſtrong enthuſiaſm about the beauties of nature; nor without a certain inſpired, though not an acquired knowledge of the philo-

ſophy

ſophy of it too. What are all the hints and alluſions to arts and ſciences, ſome of them unknown to the world, and others ſuppoſed to be ſo to himſelf, which the commentators mark out in Homer's works, but a ſort of præ-ſentiment, or, as it were, a flight at ſcience, which duller mortals were forced to earn thro' the labour of academies? I think, ſuch inſtances as theſe, with dreams, and many other proofs of ſtronger force, may be brought as arguments for the independance of the human ſoul upon matter: for, though we ſhould allow the materialiſts, that the knowledge, we attain from the deductions of reaſoning or reflection, may be but the natural effect of the animal ſpirits upon the fibres of the brain, which is the unintelligible jargon they ſpeak, yet ſurely the diſcoveries, we ſometimes make, without any deduction at all, cannot be accounted for from the mere organization of matter, but muſt ariſe from a certain impulſe foreign to it.

Adieu, my Love!

HENRY.

HIATUS.

LETTER CCXXXIII.

My dear FANNY,

I AM here attending the aſſizes, and enjoyed but one day at home. I muſt be confined here this week, but depend upon the Alto Relievo of your charming letters, to bear me thro' it; one of which I received yeſterday, and expect two more, before I return to Maidenhall.

I do aſſure you, as a truth, that I have not felt the leaſt ſymptom of the cholic, ſince I left Dublin.

In ſhort, there is ſomething extraordinary in my diſorder; for ſurely the cure of ſo remarkable a caſe could not be ſo ſuddenly or ſo ſlightly performed; for I live as uſual, except in one particular, that I go ſupperleſs to bed, and riſe early. If this be my remedy, it is a very eaſy one, when abſent from you: for what entertainment ſhall retain me at board, or what pleaſure detain me in bed, when you, my ſociety and happineſs at both, are diſtant from me?

I here ſend you my anſwer to ——'s genteel letter.

The prologue, you ſent me, is, in general, very well, has a good turn and ſpirit of poetry in it; but there is one vile line, as it has but a ſimple meaning in itſelf, and no ſort of context with the reſt:

"To greet his ſhade this grateful night we give."

"A foe to folly, but the friend of man," is an old line: I think, it is in Rocheſter's poem upon Dorſet's ſatires, where alſo is this line, "The beſt "good man, with the worſt-natur'd muſe." But ſomewhere, I am ſure, I have ſeen it before.

Adieu, my maſter-work of art and nature; whom no ſatire can inveſt without, nor adulation can corrupt within! Farewel, while I do ſo; for our happineſs is one!

The poſt is come in, and no letter from you—Unkind!

LETTER CCXXXIV.

I AM not, my deareſt Harry, a ſufficient miſtreſs of language to expreſs the heart-felt pleaſure, which your letters give me: they fill my mind with ſuch a kind of rapture, as ariſes from reflecting on

any

any extraordinary benefit, we have received from Providence: it is a mixture of praiſe, gratitude, and love. Indeed, every act of kindneſs of your's raiſes me to the beſt and trueſt devotion. I admire and bleſs the greatneſs and goodneſs of that Almighty Being, who formed thee; while my heart overflows with the moſt thankful ſenſe of his unmerited benevolence, in being graciouſly pleaſed to make thee mine.

You ſay, you have enjoyed but one day at home, ſince we parted; and I have been but one day abroad: ſo we remain equal debtors to pleaſure, if that term may be juſtly applied to any circumſtance, time, or place, I meet with, in your abſence.

You have already, I hope, received my excuſe for not writing by Thurſday's poſt—*Unkind!*—how couldſt thou deem me ſo?

I will not, becauſe I cannot, tell you how ſincerely I rejoice at hearing you have got the better of your cholic. I have not had any return, that ſignifies, of my diſorder; but am ſtill very lame, and ſuffer much from the rheumatiſm.

I think your letter to —— an exceſſive clever one: it ſhews, at once, the man of ſenſe and buſineſs; but ſtill you ſay nothing of your own affairs, and ſeem more inclined to adviſe, than engage with him.

I hear, lady O—— is to be in town in a few days; ſo think it needleſs to write. I have not any thing new to acquaint you with: every thing and perſon are juſt in the ſame ſituation, you left them.

Adieu, my Love!

FRANCES.

LETTER CCXXXV.

Dear FANNY,

I RECEIVED your letter; and, ſince you are well once more, obſerve, that I will never give you *credit* for being ſick again; and I hope you will never have diſcredit for being irregular, to which, believe me, all your complaints are owing. At the ſame time, I diſclaim any compaſſion from you too, when I am ill again of my old diſorder; for, from the diſcontinuance of it, ſince I left town, I am convinced, that early hours, and ſupperleſs ſlumbers, are the abſolute cure for it. As truly as that vice produces vice, exceſſes, being of the ſame nature, beget each other. We ought certainly to ſit up after ſupper; then we ſhall, as ſurely, lie a-bed in the morning; and conſequently, a late breakfaſt falls too ſuddenly upon dinner; then a ſlight repaſt keeps back the natural appetite 'till night, when the irregularity muſt, of courſe, begin again. And yet the cure is eaſy; for, but any one exceſs in this rotation being omitted, the whole will fall again into it's due order; as, by ſtopping any ſingle point of a circle, you arreſt the whole.

Juſt as I had gone ſo far, a poor boy begged at my door, in the ſtile of a poor ſcholar, and modeſtly aſked for nothing but paper. It ſeems he is orphan'd both of father and mother, and lives from cottage to cottage in the pariſh where he was born. The boy had a good honeſt look, and I took him into Thompſon's ſhop, and bound him apprentice. I am pleaſed with the thought of what charming ſurprize it will be to-morrow to the whole pariſh, when they inquire after their foundling, to hear, that Providence met him begging in the

the way, had charity for him, and bound him to a trade.

I am very glad to hear, that *our* lady is coming to town; but would not have you decline writing to her, on that pretence. You can ſay many prettier and genteeler things in a letter, than you could in perſon; and writing, ſuch as your's, to ſuch taſte and underſtanding as her's, has confirmed more laſting friendſhips, than ever converſation did.

I have not hinted any thing to this houſe about my correſpondence with —; nor ſhall I, 'till I ſee the event of it. If it ſhould not anſwer your expectations, I will not ſpeak of it at all. I would not, for fifty guineas, I had not proceeded as far as I did; but my failing of ſucceſs will not give me one ſhilling's worth of concern. I ſhould be uneaſy at having paſſed over, through neglect or inadvertency, any opportunity, Providence had thrown in my way; but more particularly in this caſe, as you were the index which pointed out the occaſion: but I have a turn of mind, that reconciles me to a diſappointment in any affair of life, which does not happen through my own fault.

Adieu, my comfort! my only coadjutor to my own conſcience, farewel!

LETTER CCXXXVI.

My deareſt FANNY,

I RETURNED this day extremely fatigued from the aſſizes; and, having roved through my gardens and fields, and looked over my manufactures, while it was light, I have but little more time, than to write one letter more to ——, and to make a copy of it for you. As our correſpondence

ence will be then cloſed, I may expect the event of it ſoon; which, whatever it may be, you ſhall be immediately informed of. Perhaps, after I have given him the complete plan of operation, he may indeed proceed upon it, like Hudibras profiting of Ralpho's gifts, but may employ ſome other perſon to execute it for him. Why then there is but ſo much ink and paper waſted, for trouble I make no account of: and all I ſhall regret, is the precious time I have thrown away, which might have been ſo much more agreeably employed in writing to you; which though, in fact, I have not neglected, yet I have wanted leiſure to exert my faculties in the manner, I ſhould do, to your charming apprehenſion.

Next Monday I go to Belmont to ſettle *your* affairs in that province.

I am, my deareſt Fanny, your faithful truſtee, and indefatigable agent.

LETTER CCXXXVII.

INDEED, my ſweet Harry, I am very ill of a violent cold, which I have got, without knowing how. I have a cough, that would deafen you, if you was near me: it almoſt ſhakes me to pieces, and hinders me from ſleeping the whole night. If I am not better, I will be bled on Monday. Take notice, I am neither peeviſh, nor low-ſpirited; and only mention my illneſs, by way of converſation.

Tho' I am utterly ignorant of every thing, which relates to the ſcheme of your letters to ——, I dare, from my own opinion, pronounce it a perfect one; for ſenſe like truth will ſtrike conviction on any intelligent mind, without the help of demonſtration.

I am

I am ſincerely glad to find you returned to your ſweet retirement. May every pleaſure, which virtue, ſenſe, health, and tranquility can beſtow, attend my deareſt life! And be aſſured, my dear Harry, there is nothing in this world can ſo much alleviate the pains of abſence, and the many other diſagreeable circumſtances, which attend my preſent ſituation, as the thoughts of your being happy; and I ſolemnly declare, I would not, for any conſideration, be perſuaded, that you felt as much concern from our ſeparation, or wiſhed as ardently for me, as I do to be with you. There is a kind of romantick juſtice in this ſentiment, which pleaſes me, and, I hope, will not offend you; for, as you have ſuch a vaſt ſuperiority over me, in every virtue, every charm, the only pre-eminence, I aſpire to, is that of loving moſt: believe me, it is a painful one; and yet I will not part with it, nor bear to be rivalled, or outdone, in this my ſingle merit, even by thee.

Adieu!

FRANCES.

LETTER CCXXXVIII.

My dear FANNY,

I HAVE three of your letters lying before me now, which I had not time to anſwer or remark upon before; as you know the hurry, and complication of buſineſs, I am engaged in.

As to ——, whom you mention, I have not heard one ſyllable, ſince his firſt, and only letter to me. Tho' he ſaid then, he was to ſtay at —— for a fortnight; which time was not elapſed, before he had my laſt letter; yet, perhaps, he did not ſtay as long as he deſigned, and might have gone

gone home, before I had finiſhed my eſſay. This may account for the delay of hearing from him: or, perhaps, he has taken time to conſider, and conſult ſome friends about it. But as I ſaid in a former letter on this head, I was ſo prepared, as not to ſuffer any diſappointment, from the very firſt of my application to him; ſo ſhall trouble myſelf no more about the matter, unleſs I hear from him again; and then it ſhall be as a new affair to me.

You have renewed a ſubject, which we have had frequent diſputes about; that my ſenſe is better than your's, but your love greater than mine. Now I ſhall ſtill argue both theſe points with you; and the latter, I hope, I ſhall make, at leaſt, doubtful, during our lives. If I have a ſtronger ſenſe, you have a prettier one; and, if I appear to have any advantage over you, in the humility of your opinion only, it is more owing to the fortitude of my mind, than the excellence of my underſtanding. As to the ſecond point, it is out of debate, as you ſeem to have given it up, by the firſt; for a man muſt love you in proportion to his underſtanding.

I did not mean to ſcold, but warn my pet, when I hinted at irregularities; which, I apprehended, was the occaſion of the heavy cold, you complained of. What I meant was ſitting up, and lying in bed, late; both of which are very bad, in a *double* ſenſe, at preſent. But I am quite eaſy, ſince you have promiſed to conform to the rules, I ſhall preſcribe to you: as you likewiſe know my ſentiments already, I need not repeat them; for I have that confidence in you, that you will ſtrictly govern yourſelf by them. Nor need I endeavour to give them weight, by hinting to you, that not only your own health and ſpirits, but the health, ſtrength, and happineſs of that, which may, one day, be as dear to you as your own, entirely depend upon the

prudent

prudent regimen of yourſelf, at this time. I am up every morning at five, tho' I do not go to bed 'till twelve; and, notwithſtanding the labour of body, and anxiety of mind, I go through all the day, I feel ſuch chearfulneſs and flow of ſpirits about me, owing to this alone, that I cannot contain myſelf from ſinging and dancing about my fields, like one ſtung by the Tarantula.

I have now gone through your three letters, and am ſorry they are at an end; for, like a perſon uſed to ſpeak from notes, I have nothing more to ſay, but—that

I am, my charming girl, no leſs your's, than ever, and I cannot ſay more.

HENRY.

A ſecond letter is wanting here, which this ſeems alſo to anſwer.

LETTER CCXXXIX.

My deareſt HARRY,

I AM ſtill a poor lonely wretch. Judge, from your own heart, how earneſtly I wiſh for you, and how tenderly and conſtantly my thoughts are employed in lamenting your abſence, and the cruel neceſſity which occaſions it. It is now a month, by common calculation, ſince we parted; what a length of time, when meaſured by the pangs of abſence! and yet you do not ſpeak of coming to me. I envy you the complicated hurry of buſineſs, you are engaged in: it divides your anxiety, and prevents your thinking too earneſtly on any one ſubject. I rejoice at it, while I feel the uneaſineſs of having my every ſentiment and idea fixed on the

the only object which can give me pain or pleaſure, thy dear ſelf alone.

Your kind, your charming letter has, indeed, raiſed my ſpirits to an higher degree of chearfulneſs, than they have known, for ſome time paſt: but while the elegant tenderneſs, which you there expreſs, elates my heart to a kind of rapture, it neceſſarily increaſes my ſorrow for our ſeparation:

"So mourning comes, by bliſs convey'd,
"And ev'n the ſweets of love allay'd."

My deareſt life may be perfectly aſſured, that there is no enjoyment, however dear to me, that I would not readily ſacrifice to the pleaſure of obliging him: for this reaſon, I was picqued at your ſeeming to ſuſpect me of irregularity. Take my word, that the dear little object of our mutual care, and, I hope, bliſs, ſhall not ſuffer through any fault of mine, that I can avoid. I am in bed every night by twelve, and up at nine. If my lying ſo long be a fault, I will not cover it with a falſehood: but if you knew the many reſtleſs and uneaſy hours I paſs in bed, you would more wonder at my riſing ſo early, than at my lying ſo late. You muſt allow ſomething to the weakneſs of my condition, and conſider the vaſt difference between this, and my former way of living; and you will find my nine almoſt equal to your five in the morning.

I am ſurprized ——— has not wrote to you; but not at your ſentiments on the occaſion. They are conſiſtent with that good ſenſe and ſteadineſs of mind, which accompanies my dear practic philoſopher through every action of his life.

Adieu, my deareſt Harry! May we never be able to determine the only point, which I hope, and believe,

believe, we ſhall ever diſpute on! and may each inceſſantly endeavour, through the courſe of our lives, to make the only coveted or conteſted ſuperiority between us (that of loving moſt) appear doubtful, even to our lateſt moments.

Adieu!

LETTER CCXL.

Dear FANNY,

I PITY you not for being alone, knowing your mind, and the uſe you are capable to make of it; though, by your mentioning your ſolitude in ſuch a forlorn way, I am afraid you have not a proper ſet of books to read. Indeed your preſent ſtudy is but thinly ſcattered with them; and mere amuſement is but a ſorry comfort in ſolitude; which requires the beſt helps of reflection, moral philoſophy, and religion, to ſupport; which light reading is but ill qualified to afford us. I do not mean to make you an abſtracted enthuſiaſt, by the ſtudy I ſhall recommend to you: but what I ſhall preſcribe will not only qualify you for retirement, but for the world too; at leaſt, for that part of it, which is worthy of your ſenſe, ſpirit, and virtue, to hold ſociety with. When you have engaged in ſuch a courſe of dead authors, you will have the leſs reaſon to lament my abſence; for you will there find, much better, that ſenſe, philoſophy, and virtue, which you are ſo partial to compliment me with; and the real excellencies of thoſe things may, perhaps, be as dead in me, as they are in them.

I do not mention my going to you, becauſe the time was fixed already for that, which is about the time

time of your * — &c. and you know my ſituation too well, to deſire it ſeriouſly ſooner.

My pet, you ſurely could not imagine I expected you ſhould be up at five in the morning. I only mentioned my own practice, to vaunt myſelf, not to preſcribe to you; and ſhall be ſatisfied with cutting you off only one hour in the morning: but, to ſhew you how indulgent I ſhall be to you, at the ſame time, I will allow you to go to bed an hour, or even two, earlier, at night.

—— has played a very knaviſh prank lately, with regard to me. Tom can inform you: but I ſhall not expoſe him, for two extraordinary reaſons; becauſe I do not believe any other man would decline it; and becauſe I have a ſincere picque to him, upon an occaſion, I mentioned to you, ſome time ago.

Adieu! my heart's tranſport.

HENRY.

* L'accouchment.

LETTER CCXLI.

My dear FANNY,

I INCLOSE you this paper, becauſe it relates to the ſubject of one of my late letters, about reading. I ſend it to you more for your amuſement, than inſtruction; as you need no hint of this kind: nor, indeed, do I think reading itſelf any otherwiſe neceſſary to my charming philoſopher, than to direct or adapt your thoughts to proper ſtudies; for an ant, or a ſtraw, which gave you occaſion to exerciſe your own reflections, would anſwer the end as well. Give but fair play to the ingenious nature inhabiting the breaſt, my proudeſt manſion,

and all human learning were ſuperfluous to thee. Happy for mankind, if arts and ſciences were merely ſo! As all ſtates thrive beſt upon their proper forces, ſo theſe, like auxiliaries, though called in as friends, often remain as tyrants.

I am well. Amen to you!

A letter is miſſing here.

LETTER CCXLII.

FRANCES to HENRY.

THOUGH I am thoroughly convinced, that my letters cannot afford you the leaſt entertainment, yet I think it in ſome meaſure incumbent on me to acknowledge yours; as inſolvent debtors are more frequently obliged to make promiſes to their creditors, than thoſe who are able, but not willing, to pay. Like them too, my oft-repeated thanks only prove my poverty; but, were I capable of making any other return, I would rather pay, than own, the debt. You muſt then, my dear teacher, accept the little all, I have to offer, as freely, as I give it; my love, eſteem, and gratitude, which are, indeed, ſincerely your's.

I am afraid to write any more, leſt I ſhould enter into the Melpomene ſtrain; for, notwithſtanding all your precepts, I cannot, will not be ſatisfied, while you withhold my primum mobile, your dear ſelf, from me. Indeed, Harry, though you do not know it, your philoſophy renders you cold and indifferent to me; elſe how is it poſſible for you to abſtain from even wiſhing to be with me?—Hang up philoſophy!—I will have done.—You ſhall not be teazed with my complaints, though ſure I have much

much cauſe to be uneaſy; for, in thy abſence, joy is ſeen no more —

May the health and chearfulneſs, which is fled from me, be doubled to my love, and I will not regret them.

Adieu, my deareſt Harry!

FRANCES.

LETTER CCXLIII.

My dear FANNY,

AS I have had no letter from you laſt poſt, I ſhall employ that portion of time, which is more particularly dedicated to you three times a week, in communicating to you ſuch reflections as occur to me, at preſent; which I take juſt in the very order they ſucceed one another in my own mind.

I am, forſooth, a great philoſopher:—I practiſe it in myſelf, and perform it to all the world. In the ſevereſt trials, I think I ſhould be able to exhibit myſelf to the ſatisfaction of all ſpectators. In a gaol, I could comfort myſelf with theſe reflections: "Here I can enjoy a perfect vacation from "all buſineſs or care: all ſolicitude after honours, "and all anxiety about fortune, are uſeleſs here, "becauſe incompatible with my preſent ſtate. I "can here give up my whole time to reading and "contemplation, without the reproach of idleneſs; "and can here indulge my much loved ſolitude, "without the imputation of a miſanthrope ſingu-"larity. Here my occupation and my leiſure are "all my own; for few intrude upon the wretch's "levee. Welcome the interruption of thoſe that "do; for he muſt be a friend indeed, who ſeeks "us in a gaol. Happy then, thrice happy ſtate, "which, at the ſame time, proves our virtue, and "approves

" approves our friends!" Even in the day of ſickneſs, and the night of death, could I ſuſtain the pains, and ſurvey the terrors, with an unſhaken mind, from this ſoliloquy: " Grant, juſt God, " that the vices, errors, and follies, of my paſt " intemperate youth, may be oppoſed, at the great " day of account againſt the humane offices I have " performed in act, and the general benevolence I " have always had in will, even to the vaſt circle " of all created or poſſible beings of the univerſe; " and, in this hope, welcome thou glorious death, " ſo much dreaded, becauſe ſo little underſtood?

" Welcome, thou cordial to a troubled breaſt,
" The ſofteſt remedy, that grief can find;
" The gentle ſpell, that lulls our cares to reſt,
" And calms the ruffling paſſions of the mind!

" Thou happy minute, the firſt of immortality, " how have men traduced thee, by comparing " thee to a long ſleep! but ſleep is a tedious death, " while death is but an inſtant ſleep."

Yet, with all this appearance of philoſophy, I am prone to anger, paſſion, and reſentment; and, though I am ſufficiently aware of this foible, and ſet the whole force of my reaſon againſt it, I am not maſter enough of myſelf to preſerve my temper ſometimes, upon the ſlighteſt provocation, even of the folly of a child. Now what is the reaſon of ſuch remarkable inconſiſtency in my character, has been the ſubject of this hour's contemplation; and I have attributed it to this; that nature muſt univerſally prevail, and will always be found too ſtrong for art. In the firſt inſtances, I mentioned to you, I owe my philoſophy to an happy turn of conſtitution and genius; to a certain careleſſneſs about, and ſovereign contempt for the things of this life, when they are out of my power, though nobody enjoys them more, when they are within my reach;

and an elevated hope, and ſtrong conviction of the enjoyments of the other world; by the frequent contemplation of which I have happily improved nature into a habit of philoſophy: but, in the latter caſe, I am almoſt afraid art will never be able to conquer nature; though, at ſome times, it may govern, or diſguiſe it; becauſe, perhaps, triſling occaſions do not ſufficiently call upon my philoſophy to exert itſelf; and no army is ſo ſoon overcome, as that which too much deſpiſes its enemy.

Adieu!

LETTER CCXLIV.

YOUR letters fill me, at once, with the extremeſt pleaſure, and the tendereſt concern. My heart melts in me, while I read thy thoughts: A kind of a gentle tremor throbs my breaſt, which is not to be deſcribed, nor underſtood by any, who have not felt the extremes of joy, and grief, which I have known for thee. The little underſtanding I am miſtreſs of is charmed with your truly philoſophic ſentiments: but the fond woman is hurried into grief and madneſs, at the bare mention of thoſe ſubjects, which are, indeed, the real but ſevere trials of our religion and philoſophy. I have many times been ſo weak (you, perhaps, may call it cruel) as to lament the poſſibility of your dying. I am certain, I ſhall never be able to think of your death, either in a chriſtian or philoſophic light. Let me intreat you never to mention it more: indeed I cannot bear the thought.—"Forlorn of "thee, whither ſhould I betake me? where ſub-"ſiſt?" Oh! if you love me, Harry, the ſingle conſideration of my diſtreſs, in being torn from thee, ſhould make you even anxious to delay your future happineſs. You would not call the moment

of

of our ſeparation an happy one, were thy ſoul linked to mine, as mine to thee.

" Oh! the ſoft commerce! oh! the tender ties,
" Cloſe twiſted with the fibres of the heart;
" Which broken, break them—and drain off the ſoul
" Of human joy, and make it pain to live!—
" And is it, then, to live, when we two part?
" 'Tis the ſurvivor dies.---My heart, no more!"

I doubt not but you will think my tenderneſs, upon this occaſion, entirely ſelfiſh: indeed I grant it is ſo;—for I would leave thee, Harry; with tranſport leave thee! well knowing that my death would be conducive to thy happineſs. Your religion and philoſophy would prevent the effects of your natural tenderneſs.—My little, happy ſpirit (for ſuch, I doubt not, it would be) ſhould miniſter unſeen to thy gentle ſorrow, and bring thee peace and comfort from above. My mind is ſomewhat cheered by this laſt hope.

I ſhall conclude my letter here, as it would be the art of ſinking, to mention even our meeting in this world; which, indeed, I begin to deſpair of; but, in a ſtrong hope of our future happineſs, I ſubſcribe myſelf,

Eternally your's,

FRANCES.

HIATUS.

LETTER CCXLV.

FRANCES to HENRY.

I AM vaſtly uneaſy at not hearing from you laſt poſt. I have a thouſand apprehenſions, leſt ſome accident ſhould have befallen my heart's trea-

ſure; for I am ſure he is not capable of neglecting me. The badneſs of the weather adds to my concern. Every drop of rain, ſhrinks me, as if it touched my heart, when I think that thou, its deareſt part, art, perhaps, expoſed to it. I work myſelf into an hundred different terrors, on your account; yet ſtill I hope that God, in whom we truſt, will protect and ſave thee from every danger: "He ſhall give his angels charge over thee, to "keep thee in all thy ways."

I flatter myſelf, that to-morrow's poſt will bring me glad tidings: 'till then, I will endeavour to ſuſpend my fears; but, for the preſent, my mind is too much diſturbed to allow my writing on any ſubject, that could afford you the leaſt entertainment. What would I not give to be with you this moment? I ſhould find more joy in being wet, dirty, and tired, on that occaſion, than all the pleaſures of this world can give me. I have often longed for Gyges' ring; but never ſo much as now. I have frequently amuſed myſelf with thinking of the extreme pleaſure I ſhould have in ſurpriſing you with my preſence, at the very moment you were, perhaps, lamenting my abſence, or wiſhing for me to ſhare in the rational delight, you ſometimes receive, from a fine paſſage in a favourite author. This whim has entertained me much; and, by the force of fancy, I have ſpent many delightful hours in your muſeum, when you little thought I was ſo near you. I have, in the ſame manner, accompanied you many a mile in your evening walks, and held long converſations with you, though you, perhaps, never uttered a ſyllable, during the time of ſuch imaginary diſcourſe. I never found any thing in caſtle-building half ſo pleaſant as this:—It annihilates both time and ſpace, and brings us together, in ſpight of the ſeverity of that ill fate, which parts us. But I hope

hope ſoon to ſee this, and all other imaginary joys, realized in the ſubſtantial bliſs of ſeeing and converſing with thee, my deareſt Harry.

I am in ſome concern about my two laſt letters directed to Maidenhall, as you left home before they could reach you. There was one of them incloſed in your brother's, which I fear your uncle has opened —Let me know their fate, as ſoon as you are acquainted with it.

Adieu, my heart's delight! I am, with love, truth, and conſtancy, ever your's.

FRANCES.

LETTER CCXLVI.

Callen.

I HAVE paſſed a very diſagreeable time of it ſince I ſet out; for the hoſts, I have met with, thought the beſt way to make me welcome was to make me drunk. Conſider how irkſome it muſt be, for a man to be forced to a thing, which he does not like, who does not even care to be preſſed to what he does. What a terrible thing muſt it be for one, who hates drink, to be obliged to it, without any inducement toward it; to keep company with men, that I would rather even get drunk than converſe with; and yet to be under the neceſſity of doing both at the ſame time. At ——, I was *ill*-treated with corporation politics, and four claret; and at ——, with puns and beer. At length, I have eſcaped hither, to my agreeable friend W. B. where I ſhall, as it were, perform quarantine, before I betake my impatient ſteps toward thy feaſt of reaſon.

I am, my deareſt girl,
Eternally your's,
HENRY.

LETTER CCXLVII.

THOUGH I think I have been pretty much uſed to diſappointments, I find I am not yet philoſopher enough to bear them without a ſenſible chagrin. Perhaps it is owing to the punctual exactneſs of my own diſpoſition, that I am hurt at the moſt trifling breach of promiſe, when committed by any perſon, for whom I have the leaſt regard. For theſe reaſons, I have felt more uneaſineſs at the frequent diſappointment of my expectations, with regard to your coming to town, than I ſhould from a certainty of your not coming theſe ſix months.—But a truce with the ſubject; for I am determined never to mention it more.

I am mighty glad you have eſcaped from the diſagreeable circumſtances you mention, and are ſo happy with your agreeable friend. As it is not in my power to make you amends for the loſs of his converſation, I ſhall not detain you longer, than while I ſubſcribe myſelf,

Sincerely your's,
FRANCES.

HIATUS.

LETTER CCXLVIII.

My dear FANNY,

I AM ſincerely concerned at the bad ſtate of health, you are in, at preſent: but have a good heart, my own dear pet, for you will be much better of the *next*; ſo let not this diſcourage you.

I am extremely well pleaſed to find you are at your aunt's now; but am afraid of the diſturbance, you apprehended from the trade carried on in the back-

back-yard. I beg to know immediately, how you like your ſituation, in every particular; and every inſtance of kindneſs or good-nature, you meet with from any of your friends, who are therefore more mine, ſhall be ever acknowledged by me with more than thanks. If I have a thought, but what tends to my dear Fanny's happineſs, to her proper and honourable eſtabliſhment in life, may I be as much diſappointed in the faithleſs wiſh, as I am certain I ſhould be in the worthleſs experiment!

Adieu, my dear, charming fugitive! oh, when may my doors, as well as my arms, be open to receive thee, thou moſt welcome and much deſired gueſt?

Farewel, 'till then, thy impatient exile!

LETTER CCXLIX.

I AM ſincerely pleaſed at finding my dear Harry in ſuch a chearful mood; though what you jeſt with, like the fable of the boys and frogs, has been almoſt death to me; nor am I able to enjoy the little relaxation from pain, which I am, at preſent, bleſſed with, from the dreadful certainty of what I have yet to undergo.

It was, indeed, very lucky for me, that I got to my aunt's: ſhe has behaved with great care and tenderneſs, the want of which muſt have added greatly to my ſufferings, if not immediately endangered mine, and the poor Bab's life. As to the noiſe, I muſt compound for it, and endeavour to bear with one inconvenience, where there are ſo many conveniencies.

I cannot help telling you, that I think our friends in —— have behaved very ill to you. I had no claim to their friendſhip or regard; but I think they ſhould have rejoiced in any opportunity

of ſhewing their gratitude and affection to ſo near a relation, and kind a benefactor. The particulars of their conduct I refer to our meeting, which I hope and believe will be ſoon. Obſerve, that I have never ſeemed to take the leaſt notice of their behaviour, nor ſhewn any kind of pique or reſentment at it. By this you may perceive, your example has not been thrown away. I ſtrive to copy it, though convinced I ſhall never, in any thing, arrive at the ſame degree of perfection; and, I aſſure you, I ſcarce engage in the moſt trifling action, without aſking myſelf, would my Harry, if preſent, approve my doing ſo? or, how would he act in the ſame circumſtances? So really anxious am I to become thy epitome.

I hope I ſhall keep up a little longer, to gather ſtrength and ſpirits for the approaching æra; and that Bab and I may live to thank you for the kind aſſurances of your preſent and future regard. Adieu!

FRANCES.

LETTER CCL.

My dear FANNY,

I HAVE this day begun my * great buildings, &c. The boldneſs of my undertakings, with the amazing ſucceſs of my atchievements, ſurprizes even myſelf; but is a matter of miraculous wonder to the reſt of the world. Yet it is impoſſible to conceive, without having tried, how much may be compaſſed by the help of a little thought, ſpirit, and perſeverance; referring the ſucceſs ultimately to providence, which has hitherto, in a good hour

* Mills, bleach-yard, &c.

be

be it ſpoken, favourably attended every one of my bold and deſperate undertakings. So proſper me ſtill, as I mean honour to you, my trueſt love, and to your children! for whom I begin to feel already a father's fondneſs, ſay rather a grandfather's; for I have always behaved to you, as a favourite child; cheriſhing you for your own advantage, and thwarting you only for your good.

The compliment, you make, of ſetting me for your example, is higher than my merits: You need no better pattern than the fair exemplar in your mind, whenever you are pleaſed to reflect your own thoughts upon it; and for this purpoſe, if you conſider me as your monitor only, it will be the higheſt favour, I ſhall pretend to.

Adieu, my ſweet pupil!

LETTER CCLI.

I DID not receive your's of the 9th, till a few hours ago. This delay, joined to your late ſilence, threw me into a ſituation very little ſhort of diſtraction. I have not ſlept two hours at a time ſince Thurſday, and have almoſt blinded myſelf with crying. As you have been always ſo exactly punctual in writing, I muſt ſay it was unkind to miſs a poſt at this particular time. My ſpirits, weakened and worn out by bodily pain, ſunk under the moſt diſmal apprehenſions. I imagined you had met with ſome dreadful accident; or, at beſt, concluded that your uncle had intercepted my letters. Heaven be praiſed, my fears were groundleſs! but let me intreat you, my dear Harry, to write conſtantly for the future, though your leiſure ſhould afford but a ſingle line. I know you think it extremely ſilly to be uneaſy on ſuch occa-

ſions; but indeed I cannot help it, and muſt therefore beg your indulgence to this particular weakneſs.

As I am ſure all your undertakings are founded on reaſon and virtue, it would be arraigning providence to doubt their ſucceſs. May he ever bleſs, proſper, and preſerve my love! and then, though he afflict me, I ſhall not complain.

I am not offended at your making ſo light of my preſent ſufferings: "Thou canſt not ſpeak of "what thou doſt not feel." But I am affronted, you take no notice of my favourite * Elfrida: if you do not like it, let me beg you not to tell me ſo: for I am vain enough to fancy there is a ſtrong parity between her ſentiments and mine.

Adieu, my deareſt life,

FRANCES.

* A dramatic writing which ſhe had ſent him.

LETTER CCLII.

THOUGH you caution me about ſpeaking my opinion freely about Elfrida, I muſt not be confined or reſtrained by any thing but my own judgment, as far as that will go.

The author's prefatory letters ſhew him to be a better critic, than his work ſhews him to be a poet. There are ſome pretty turns, which any one, who *imitates*, may write: But the ſoul of poetry is wanting; which I am certain of, from my not *feeling*, through the whole; and a work muſt be very ſlight and inſipid, which amuſes only the fancy, without affecting the heart. I will not allow any thing to make us *wiſer*, which does not make us better; and the cold inanimate contemplation

plation of moral beauty is not ſufficient for this. He, who ſaid, virtue need but be ſeen, to be adored, expreſſed himſelf but faintly; I ſay, ſhe muſt be felt.

But to return — Orgar is a vile, unnatural brute, who would proſtitute his daughter to the honour of being a king's miſtreſs. Athelwold is but a poor character through the whole; and, as to Elfrida, I will not compliment her ſo much, to ſay there is any parity between your ſentiments and hers. She ſeems in her firſt ſpeech, to be picqued, in pride, that ſhe is not more publickly manifeſted to the world; talks high of Orgar's daughter, courts, &c. I think her rather like * Semele, than you; and that impatient temper of her's, jealous of his love in abſence, and, not without murmur, ſubmitting to the prudence of concealing their marriage, perhaps drew upon her that judgment of providence, which deſtroyed her huſband, and rendered her miſerable. I think the ſtile very indifferent, and in ſome places, mean and abſurd. One or two of the heroes, I think, ſays *'ſdeath*, which is not a word in the Engliſh dictionary.

Adieu, my dear pet! May you never have Elfrida's fate! though I would rather you had that than Semele's.

I met yeſterday with Bolingbroke's letters upon the method and uſe of reading hiſtory, &c. I have gone through but the two firſt letters. I like them extremely, but dare not ſay they are ſenſible and clever; becauſe I have ſeveral times ſpoke

* She was miſtreſs to Jupiter. She obtained a requeſt from him that he would ſhew himſelf to her in all the glory of his deity: but the rays of his Divinity, like lightning, ſtruck her dead.

and wrote to you upon this ſubject, and have often inculcated that we miſapply our ſtudy-leiſure extremely, who read for mere amuſement, or even theory contemplation. Such perſons may be ſaid to ſtudy, as the college lad expreſſed himſelf, by an happy blunder, "I read ſix hours a day, and "no one is the wiſer."

I think ſuch a man may as well be aſleep; for he can only be ſaid to have pleaſant dreams, who reads any thing, but with a view of improving his morals, or regulating his conduct. I mean men, who are happy enough to be under no neceſſity of reading, but for themſelves; for arts and ſciences muſt be ſtudied by ſome people for the uſeful purpoſes of life. Adieu!

HENRY.

HIATUS.

LETTER CCLIII.

My dear FANNY,

I DRANK hard at ——, and it is now too late to reach home: however, I might get as far as ——, with eaſe; but have ſtopped ſhort here that I might be at liberty to think of, and write to you, more agreeable to me than any company or converſe, I can meet with in this world, while my back is turned to you.

I received a very pretty letter from you laſt poſt, a very generous and a kind one too. The fatal neceſſity of my too long abſence from you is ſufficiently irkſome in itſelf; and the ſenſible light in which you apprehend it, and the rational manner you ſpeak of it in, ſaves me that additional weight of anxiety, which would be intolerable. You can always

always command ſenſe and reaſon enough, when you are miſtreſs of yourſelf; and, in obedience to them, let me be proud to own myſelf your vaſſal too.

The comments, I expect from you, upon thoſe writings, and others of the ſame claſs, which I have recommended to you, are beſt ſhewn in your life, by chearfulneſs and content; the firſt manifeſted in philoſophy, and the latter in reſignation. Whenever I ſit down to read any writings of this kind, I firſt ſuppoſe myſelf, in order to try their power, labouring under all the ills of ſickneſs, ſorrow, poverty, and oppreſſion: when in a ſhort time, all theſe gloomy cares are diſpelled, like miſts before the enlivening ſun-beams; and I look back firſt, with triumph, and contempt upon thoſe fleeting ſhadows, which are now poſting ſo far behind me; and then look forward with gratitude and joy, to that glorious proſpect wide-opening before me. In ſhort, there is but one misfortune in life, which I think could prove too hard for ſuch reflections as theſe to ſupport me through; I mean the loſs of thee, of thee, my only *gain*: and I am very certain, that nothing could prevent me from following you precipitately, but the fear, by that raſh action, of loſing you for ever.

Among the papers which I deſign to collect in my *ſolamen miſeri*, I would inſert the Hymn to Contentment, and Night piece on Death, of Parnell's. I happened to read them both this morning, at Kitty's; and, if it would not appear too much vanity, I would add ſome of my letters to you, where I ſpeak of the providence and mercy of God, and the immortality of the ſoul; which, as they are my own reflections, might have a better effect on myſelf, at leaſt, than better writings on the ſame ſubjects. A collection of eſſays, intitled

titled Spectacle de la Nature, occurs to me here, as they give you a general and comprehenſive view of natural philoſophy; which is ſuch a manifeſtation of a God infinitely wiſe, powerful and good, as — away all impious thoughts! —almoſt renders particular revelation ſuperfluous; at leaſt, to contemplative minds. There are alſo many paſſages in theſe writings, eſpecially two letters from the prior to the chevalier, which are maſterly in their kind, that are admirable to abate the ſelf-ſufficiency of Man's pride, and to humble all human preſumption to a religious and implicit obedience and ſubmiſſion to the infinitely great diſpenſations of providence; before whoſe throne let us both kneel, with a pious and virtuous devotion, not with an enthuſiaſtic or fanatic zeal; and from whoſe grace may we both receive ſuch reward, as ſhall merit our juſt and honeſt inclinations and actions toward each other! So, concluding with Othello, Amen, I ſay, to that ſweet prayer!

HENRY.

P. S. J. M. is in this houſe, offered me his company, and *ſtranges* much, as the waiter phraſes it, why I ſhould chuſe to be alone. I am not alone—"Have I not ſeen her where ſhe has not been?"

HIATUS.

LETTER CCLIV.

My dear FANNY,

YOU cannot imagine with what anxiety I wait for every poſt, at preſent, to hear a favourable account of your ſafe delivery. I own my concern is double, at this time, but double for you alone; and,

and, had I the univerſe to leave an inheritance, I would rather make hoſpitals my heirs, than have you forfeit your life, or health, to give me one. "In ſorrow ſhalt thou bring forth," was the original curſe. What labour would it have ſaved your whole ſex, if my charming girl had been our firſt mother!

The delays in the poſts, which you complain of, are owing to this: that, for ſome time paſt, they have gone later out than uſual; ſo that I had time to write my letters in the morning, and ſend ſoon enough: but now, I find, they have recovered their former diligence, which I was not aware of till yeſterday morning. I will take care, that you ſhall meet with no more diſappointments.

I have met with a book lately, which I never heard of before, and that pleaſes me extremely. It is ſtiled *microcoſmography*, or the characters of mankind. It was wrote by biſhop Earle, who was ſome time preceptor to Charles the ſecond. Moſt of the characters are very well drawn; and the whole is wrote with a good deal of wit, and ſhews a thorough knowledge of the world, both the ſpeculative and buſy parts of it. There are ſome flat endeavours at point and turn, with ſeveral paſſages unintelligible to a modern reader: but, as the whole is worth peruſal, I deſign it for your library. I ſhall ſend it up along with the hams, &c. which I deſign for Bab's firſt carnival; and, if it will give me leave to do the honours of the entertainment, I ſhall certainly be there at your appointed time.

Adieu my *life!* till we meet, I may be ſaid to have taken my leave of *it*.

LETTER CCLV.

IN the firſt place, how is my ſweet love? and well, and how is Bab? and what ſort of a Bab is it? Has it a broad, good-humoured countenance, like dad; or a lively eye, double chin, and ſaucy look, like mam? Is it moſt a wit, or a philoſopher? Does it incline rather to poetry, or metaphyſics? Is it compounded of the two heavy elements of earth and water, or the two light ones of air and fire? In ſhort, tell me every thing about it; what it ſays, and what it does, and whether it has ever yet diſcovered any ear for muſic; what ſounds affect it moſt, and whether its eyes ſparkle at the gay colours, or its brows knit into contemplation at the grave ones? I am in very chearful ſpirits upon this happy occaſion, and am exerting all my wit to be a very great fool about our ſweet infant.

I thank God, with a grateful heart, for your ſafe delivery; and do unfeignedly think, that, among the many remarkable favours, I have at ſeveral times, received from the hands of Providence, or can ever yet receive, you were its beſt and moſt valuable gift; for you are not only to me a bleſſing in yourſelf, but, like health, give me a reliſh for all the other goods of fortune, or advantages of life.

Farewel, my heart's only life!

HENRY.

HIATUS.

LETTER CCLVI.

My dear FANNY, *Kilkenny.*

I AM, at preſent, employed more agreeably than I can be otherwiſe in this town, writing to you, and waiting the arrival of the poſt to hear from you.

I am obliged to your ſecretaries, but they muſt accept my anſwers to you, for I am at you alone. Kitty gives a promiſing account our *Iülus:* And that he does not ſuck, ſurprizes me not; for *our* child could not poſſibly do any thing like another child. If he was reared entirely by the ſpoon, perhaps it would not be amiſs; that he might imbibe no humours, but what he brought into the world with him; and that he may ſay, with Richard the Third, "I am myſelf alone." Our's is ſo perfect an Engliſhman, on both ſides, that he has refuſed the Iriſh teat, becauſe it would not have the brogue on its tongue. If he is to be ſtiled Pliny, let it be the younger; for I would rather have him endowed with that goodneſs and benevolence of heart, which was his characteriſtic, than all the learning and philoſophy of the uncle.

I have been ſhifting all I can to ſettle my affairs, ſo as to make my journey to Clogher, through Dublin, convenient at this time; but, whether I can do that or no, be aſſured I will ſee my ſweet boy chriſtianized, though I go up in one ſtage, to return in the next. You ſhall hear more from me next poſt on this head. I have ſent up a fine ham and a head by a carrier, directed to my brother.

I am ſo charmed at the proper, becoming ſenſe and reaſonableneſs of your not preſſing me to go up before,

before, nor calling upon me ſince, on the juſt aſſurance that my own inclinations would induce me to it as ſoon as poſſible, that I am therefore reſolved to go *coute qui coute*, though I had not determined on it before.

Adieu, my heart's delight, and my mind's comfort!

HENRY.

HIATUS.

LETTER CCLVII.

OUR poor infant ſtill continues very ill, ſuffers great pain, and his mouth is ſo ſwelled and inflamed, that he equally refuſes food and medicine; ſo that, in perfect deſpair how to relieve him, I do nothing but ſit by his cradle all day, crying, and praying, and waiting for a criſis, which the doctor gives me hopes of.

While I ſee him in ſuch anguiſh I am almoſt tempted to expoſtulate with the Almighty, and ſay with David, "I have ſinned, O Lord, but what "harm hath he done?" In ſhort, I think there is no way of accounting for the ſufferings, natural and incidental to infants, but by believing the doctrine of original ſin: and yet this ſuppoſition ſeems intirely repugnant to our finite ideas of the goodneſs and juſtice of God; which convinces me that we are utterly incapable of forming any juſt notion of the divine attributes; or even of conceiving the true nature of them. The divines tell us that this knowledge is kept from us leſt we ſhould be able to comprehend the myſterious workings of Providence toward man, which would reduce faith into ſcience, by which one neceſſary article of ſalvation would be deſtroyed; and this life become

then

then a ſtate of perfection, not probation, for "we ſhould be as Gods, knowing good from evil."

But all this ſeems to be mere ſcholaſtick reaſoning, and I think it more orthodox in philoſophy and religion to ſuppoſe that man is endowed with juſt ſo much knowledge and perfection as that link, which he occupies in the great chain of beings reaches to: and as to the article of faith, I cannot think any thing eſſential to ſalvation which is purely conſtitutional; for there is as much difference between men's natural diſpoſition to believe, as there is between their ſtrength or other natural powers.

Such ſubjects as theſe are far beyond the reach of my capacity, but you, my dear preceptor, have taught me to reaſon, or rather to aſk queſtions on every ſubject which occurs to me, and I often find a kind of pleaſure in being ignorant, from a certainty of your being capable and kind enough to inform me: in ſhort, I carry my fondneſs for your inſtructions ſo far, that I am ſometimes ſorry I had learned to read, or had any taſte for books before we were acquainted, for every pleaſure or advantage I receive from you doubles its value, from that conſideration; and were your circumſtances of fortune eaſy, I ſhould rejoice in not having brought you any dower, for had I one I ſhould be jealous of it, and loſe the ſatisfaction which I now enjoy, of deriving every bleſſing, good and happineſs from God and you alone! oh my deareſt Harry, how tenderly, how fondly muſt I love you, when the being overwhelmed with obligations, beyond the poſſibility of return, can give pleaſure to a heart ſo proud as mine!

FRANCES.

P. S. I will

P. S. I will not delay the chriſtening till you arrive, if the child does not mend, I wiſh you would pronounce its name. I am ſtill weak and lame.

LETTER CCLVIII.

I WAITED in vain laſt poſt at Kilkenny, for a letter from one of your Secretaries. Now may Kitty's days be ever nights; and in thoſe nights, when ſhe ſtretches forth her arms for joy, may ſhe be diſappointed, as I was, when the poſt came in! Let her, like me, be "mad with the "idea, and graſp the wind!"

I have not half done my prayer, but have ſtopped ſhort, hoping this poſt, which I have juſt ſent to, may make me ſome amends for the diſappointment of the laſt.

The poſt is juſt come in, and has anſwered my wiſh of a letter from yourſelf: But I am extremely alarmed at the unfavourable account you give of yourſelf and Bab; and this very unnatural weather happens unlucky for you both.

I anſwered you already about Bab's name, which I ſhall leave entirely to you. I hope your next letter will contain a better account of yourſelf, and poor little *ourſelf*, than your former. I would not have the Chriſtening delayed on my account; and I am ſure I need not give your ſenſe and prudence a caution to have it as private as poſſible, that both the expence, and report of it, may be as ſmall as can be. The eaſe and happineſs of our *three* lives depends upon a proper diſcretion about theſe two articles. Your happineſs depends upon my welfare; my welfare upon your conduct; and *our little*

ſelf

ſelf reſts upon both. Now as you are the firſt moving principle in this chain of cauſes and effects, I am perfectly eaſy, though the conſequences are ſo choice and eſtimable.

Adieu, my Love!

HENRY.

HIATUS.

LETTER CCLIX.

I DECLARE myſelf a convert to Fitzoſborne's opinion, and "no longer doubt of "the ſalutary effects, which are ſaid to have been "produced by words." I am become a recent inſtance of their power; for my dear Harry's kind letter has wrought a greater change in my health and ſpirits, than could have been effected in the time by the whole *materia medica*. In the name of our dear little Bab, I return his duty and thanks for the kindneſs you expreſs towards him. I hope he will live to make his being mine, his ſmalleſt merit to your tenderneſs. Though I receive a very exquiſite pleaſure from ſeeing him, I cannot help grudging it to myſelf, (as I ſhould any other, unſhared by thee) and wiſhing he were placed within your view, though I ſhould, by that means, be debarred of the only joy I am capable of taſting in your abſence. Any increaſe of my fondneſs for your dear little epitome muſt be ſuperfluous; and indeed I know nothing that could add to it, but ſeeing him become as much the object of your tenderneſs, as he is of mine. I flatter myſelf with thinking the happy time will come, when it ſhall be doubtful which of us loves him beſt.

As

As I am ſtill very weak, and have not made the leaſt progreſs in recovering my appetite, I ſhould be very glad to get into the air for a little time: but I wait your orders to diſpoſe of myſelf in the country, or wherever elſe you pleaſe. All places are alike to me: I muſt live ſomewhere; and I think my having a lodging out of town for a few weeks, could make but a ſmall difference in my expences.——But let this be, or not, as you think beſt.

Adieu, thou dear diſpenſer of my preſent happineſs, and only wiſhed addition to my hopes of future bliſs!

FRANCES.

LETTER CCLX.

My dear FANNY, *Belmont.*

I WRITE this from my new farm, which I might ſtile the Paraclete; for there are "white "walls and ſilver ſprings" enough to entitle it to that appellation; though there are better reaſons for it. So romantic a place never was, if wildneſs, ſolitarineſs, with the print of Aſtræa's laſt footſteps in the ſituation, and love and conſtancy in the proprietor, be the diſtinguiſhing marks of that character.

There is ſomething amuſes and pleaſes me extremely in this chain of thought; that providence ſeems to have marked out this ſpot of earth for yours, by a train of unforeſeen accidents. I had taken the land at a time when you and I were upon ſuch terms, that it was highly probable we ſhould never be again reconciled. You had good reaſons to be highly picqued at my behaviour; and your prudence, your pride, and honour, was a juſt

a juſt bar to a re-union. At that time, perhaps, all libertine as I was, with many ſchemes in imagination, and many views in proſpect, I might have had ſome conſolation in the loſs of a woman, whom my paſſion loved, and my reaſon eſteemed, in the thought of being, in ſome ſort, eaſed from that reſtraint, which my regard to your worth, with my natural ſentiments of generoſity and honour, never yet (thank God!) extinguiſhed in me, muſt have laid me under — at ſuch a time, I ſay, we met by chance: when ſpeaking of this extraordinary, bold, and enterprizing purchaſe of mine, engaging for a thouſand acres of land, at a deſperate rent, at a hazardous criſis, and in a dangerous country, which required a large fund to improve, when I was above two thouſand pounds in debt, and had neither money, credit, nor ſtock to apply; upon deſcribing the ſituation of the place, you deſired I would name it Belmont; adding, that it was probably the only compliment, you might ever deſire from me. Some time after this, you and I projected a plan of Paraclete; which I have, this day, by an accidental turn of thought, adapted to this place. You may remember, laſt winter, that, &c.* and, when I was to look out for a nurſe, and accommodation for your ſweet ante-loved babe, I was, from ſome prior reaſons, directed to this particular place, for both.

Let me indulge myſelf farther in the contemplation of this ſcheme of providence, with regard to you and me. You choſe and approved of me, when you had before you, as Milton ſays,

"The world to chuſe, and providence your "guide."

Senſe, wit, and reading were, from my earlieſt years, the objects of my implicit adoration: and, whenever I changed my paſſion, it was in ſearch of a fit ſubject for my admiration. I, at length, poſſeſſed, unknowing, theſe rare qualities in you, and was in danger, "like the baſe Indian, to throw "a pearl away, richer than all my tribe:" But, as my reaſon improved by your charming converſe more than my own reflection, I found acknowledged, and incaſed the gem, thou "one "entire and perfect Chryſolite!" and hope never to exchange thee, but for a better world than this, made more eminently ſo, by a nobler and higher converſe there with thee, thou amiable cherubim and ſeraphim in one! in whom are ſo perfectly joined their two diſtinguiſhing characteriſtics, love and knowledge! the pleaſing hope of which enjoyment above will be a ſtronger incitement to my virtue here below. In ſhort, I do not know two perſons alive, who ſeem more adapted by nature for each other. Excuſe this vanity in me, when your approbation has already made my panegyric. My calmneſs and philoſophy is fit to temper the misfortunes and diſappointments of life; and your wit and ſpirit proper to ſeaſon and enliven the eaſe or pleaſures of it;

"Dull, taſteleſs all, if unenjoyed by thee!"

Farewell, thou beſt ſubject of my beſt comments!

HENRY.

LETTER CCLXI.

INDEED, my Harry, I wiſh to live for no other reaſon, but to make you amends for all your goodneſs to me: God grant my power may be

be in any proportion equal to my will, and we ſhall be the happieſt couple breathing: and, indeed, I think I may, without vanity, ſay, I know no two perſons, who ſeem better qualified for ſuch a ſtate, than we are; and therefore we muſt be thoroughly miſerable, if we are not entirely happy; for both our feelings and ſentiments are too delicate and refined, to be capable of that indifference, which the generality of mortals paſs their lives in. For which reaſon, I am not diſpleaſed that your ſituation and circumſtances prevented our living together, before I was thoroughly acquainted with you, or myſelf; but, though I think I might now ſafely anſwer for my future conduct, I own my moſt fervent wiſhes are ſometimes damped with fearing, that if ever we ſhould live together, you may grow weary of me, or, as Milton phraſes it,

"Too much converſe thee perhaps may ſatiate."

However, I more often lament the ſad neceſſity which parts us; and I think you more to be pitied in this ſeparation, even than I am, ſuppoſing our love to be quite equal. I have the pains of abſence to combat with, which are perhaps as much as I can bear: you have theſe alſo, joined to the reflection of having attached yourſelf to me, for no other reaſon, but the hope of finding a ſincere tender friend, and an agreeable companion: you have made it my duty, as well as inclination, to become the ſole partner, and chief ſolace of your every care, to ſmooth the rugged path of life, and make the up-hill, as well as the deſcent, leſs painful; nay, even your common affairs and oeconomy are ſo ſituated, that you really want a reaſonable woman and a faithful friend, in whom you might confide. Will you not think me vain, if I ſay you are deprived of ſuch a perſon by our ſeparation? When I conſider the opportunities I loſe of en-

dearing myſelf to you by numberleſs nameleſs acts of love and gratitude, I lament each paſſing moment, and regret my fleeting youth, for, oh! I want unnumbered ages, beyond the common date of man, to prove my fond, faithful, grateful ſoul to thee: Oh! never may the veil of paſſion cloud it more.

HIATUS.

LETTER CCLXII.

NOT one word from my Pet theſe two poſts! Perhaps you did not get my letters regularly, while I was on my route; for I did not know the courſe of the poſts, as well as I do at home. You ſee how ready I am to make an excuſe for you; and attribute your omiſſion to any thing, rather than vex myſelf with vain fears of your ſickneſs or neglect; but, in ſuch a caſe, I know that my dear Heautontimorumenos would immediately conclude me indifferent to her, or dead to myſelf:—and indeed you may as well ſuppoſe me one, as the other.

But this is nothing to the principal buſineſs of this letter; which is to deſire tea exactly at ſeven o'clock, on Tueſday evening.

"None enter may, but Love; and he
"Shall guard the door, and keep the key."

As, I dare ſay, my Life thinks this account entertainment enough for this poſt, I ſhall huſband what little wit, or ſenſe, I have, for another occaſion, and conclude myſelf,

My dear Girl,
Your's eternally,
HENRY.

LETTER CCLXIII.

Dear FANNY, *Dengan.*

I ARRIVED here laſt night, much fatigued by the warmth of the weather. I hope my Pet is well, and my Pet's Pet. My bleſſing to the little fellow.

I perceived my heart growing warm at the approach to a place, where I had, twenty years ago, ſpent ſo many chearful, boyiſh days, ſomewhat like the emotion we feel upon meeting an old ſchool-fellow; whether it be one we have a particular attachment to, or no; for I am not ſpeaking here of a rational affection, but ſuch a prejudice and partiality, as is contracted from early habit and cuſtom, before we have the free exerciſe of our underſtandings. The love of our country may be ranked under this head; by which, I do not mean that patriotiſm, which is but univerſal benevolence, *poorly* bounded by a province or kingdom; but that ſuperſtitious attachment, men have even to the very ſoil they were born in. I fancy that departed ſpirits, even in bliſs, look ſometimes back upon this world with a regard like this, though without any deſire of exchanging ſituations. I ſpeak this upon a preſumption that we carry our conſciouſneſs with us to the next world, which I look upon to be a thing ſo far from requiring proof, that to aſſert the contrary is arguing God to be partial or unjuſt. Should you be rendered a bleſſed ſpirit for your virtues, or I an unhappy one for my vices, you might indeed be ſaid to be happy, and I miſerable; but neither of us could be ſaid to be rewarded or puniſhed, without a conſciouſneſs of our being the perſons, who, in the other life, had merited or incurred theſe judgments. It is conſciouſneſs, which

makes the identity of a perſon, relative to himſelf; and, if death deſtroys this, it in effect creates another ſpirit in our ſtead; and to reward or puniſh ſuch a one for our actions here, would be partiality or injuſtice. I ſhou'd be aſhamed to inſiſt upon an argument, which, by appearing ſo obvious to me, makes me conclude has been often urged before; but, as I really never met with any thing on this head, at leaſt, deducted from this reaſoning, and that it is a ſubject you know I am fond of, I ſhould carry it a good deal farther, if I were writing to any one elſe; but your apprehenſion ſaves me that trouble, as it has often done before. Adieu!

A letter is wanting here.

LETTER CCLXIV.

I DID not receive my dear Harry's firſt letter 'till Saturday evening. I was then at the Rock, and had no poſſible means of ſending an anſwer to the Poſt-office; therefore was obliged, for the firſt time, to diſobey your commands.

In anſwer to your inquiry after mine and my Pet's health, I muſt tell you, you have been very near loſing both, ſince you left us. I attribute my illneſs to the irregular way we lived in, the four laſt days you were in town. I was ſeized on Monday night with all the ſymptoms of a violent fever: I raved inceſſantly, and did not recover my ſenſes 'till Tueſday. Polly ſent an expreſs to town, but no one came near us 'till Wedneſday. I went thro' all the neceſſary operations, and am now, thank God, very well. I came to town yeſterday, and ſhall return no more. Poor little Bab has had two convul-

convulſion fits; the laſt was very near carrying him off. They did not let me know of his illneſs, 'till I came to town. He is vaſtly altered; but I hope, and believe, he will recover. You may judge (by your own) the anxiety I feel for him.

I am vaſtly delighted with your ſentiments in regard to our future conſciouſneſs, as they are, in my mind, highly conformable to reaſon and religion: but I am ſtill more charmed with them, as they corroborate my darling hope, that we ſhall ſee, know, and converſe with each other in a future ſtate. For certainly, if we retain a conſciouſneſs of the affections and actions of this life, we ſhall likewiſe retain the idea of thoſe perſons, who were the cauſe of thoſe actions, for which we are to be puniſhed or rewarded. The only thing, I ever heard objected to this opinion, is, that ſuch remembrances might leſſen the happineſs of thoſe bleſſed ſpirits, who may, in this life, be connected by natural or acquired ties to perſons, who are to make up the number of the unhappy, in the next. To this I anſwer, from my own belief and hope, that no ſoul will be doomed to everlaſting damnation: or if there ſhould be ſuch unhappy beings, the heinouſneſs of thoſe crimes, which deſerve everlaſting miſery, would entirely eraſe the affection or regard we bore them, unknowing of their guilt; and make us readily acknowledge, when purged from groſs and ſelfiſh paſſions, that their doom is juſt. I cannot think, that, even in this life, there ever did, or will ſubſiſt, a real friendſhip, or ſincere affection between the good and bad. Virtue alone is the ſure baſis, that can make thoſe unions firm and laſting. Without that only true foundation, like Eſtcourt's gueſts,

"They part in time—
"Whoever hears this my inſtructive ſong—

" For, tho' ſuch friendſhips may be dear,
" They ne'er continue long."

I have not wrote theſe lines right, but 'tis no great matter: I have only altered the form, the ſenſe remains.

The compliment, you pay to my underſtanding, is more juſtly due to you, than me. If I am ſenſible, or intelligent, it is you have made me ſo. The fond deſire of gaining your approbation firſt rouzed me to exert the little powers, which nature lent me. Your converſe, your letters have improved my mind, and given my thoughts a turn ſuperior to the trifles, which employ the generality of my ſex. Yet ſtill I plead no merit from this boaſt, for ſuch a preceptor muſt have improved the dulleſt pupil. It is you, my charming guide, who have made me, as far as I am either, wiſe or good. You have illuſtrated your theory by practice, and, by your dear example, ſhewn me what it is to be a chriſtian and philoſopher. Go on then, my loved maſter; continue to inſtruct, and (I hope) improve me, 'till I arrive as near thy own perfection, as my ſmall powers admit. Yet ſtill remember I am a woman, nay a weak one too; ſubject to all the failings of my ſex, which require time, as well as reaſon, to conquer.

Adieu!

FRANCES.

LETTER CCLXV.

Callidon, Auguſt 10, 1752.

THIS is a very ſweet, romantic ſituation; the houſe old and bad. The boy and girl are really very fine children, and capable of any education, ſolid or polite. Lady O— is a very ſenſible,

ſible, chearful, and agreeable woman; and ſuch a perſon, as any man might be both pleaſed and proud to have belong to him, in any ſituation, or relation of life. Her affability and unaffected manners, not leſs than her food, which is little more than bread and puiſe, milk and water, would befit a cabin; while her taſte, ſpirit, and politeneſs might become a palace.

I feel a very ſingular kind of affection for her, which I never was ſenſible of before for a new acquaintance; it is ſuch a regard, as we have for an old friend. I think, I could ſpeak as freely to her, and intruſt her with any ſecret of conſequence to me, as I could to a perſon, whoſe confidence I had proved for twenty years.

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Adieu!

HENRY.

LETTER CCLXVI.

Dear HARRY,

I HAD the pleaſure of your's from Hermitage, and am highly delighted with your account of lady O——, and her babes. I have long been certain, that, whenever you knew, you would love and eſteem her; and this belief was, I think, the higheſt compliment, I ever paid her. Has ſhe not abundance of that cleverneſs, which is not to be defined; which, to the common actions of life, is like grace to beauty? And, as the latter does not ariſe from any particular complexion, limb or feature, but is the joint reſult of all; ſo neither

can the former be ſaid to depend on ſenſe or virtue, tho' I am morally certain it cannot exiſt without both: for, as we have ſeen many handſome people, who wanted the charming *Je ne ſçai quoi*; ſo we muſt have met with many good and ſenſible folk, who had not one grain of cleverneſs about them.

I am heartily concerned at the account, you give of your affairs. It is really a melancholy thing, that you have no perſon about you, whom you can depend upon; for thoſe, whoſe integrity is paſt diſpute, for want of a little *cleverneſs*, may injure you as highly, as others could by defrauding you. May I live to ſee the day, when you ſhall have made me as capable, as I am willing and faithful, to become my dear Harry's only ſteward!

Our dear little baby is ſtill very far from well. Baxter ſaw him yeſterday: he has ordered him to live entirely on chicken-broth and ſack-whey. I am ſorry to find his conſtitution ſo extremely delicate. I grieve over again for every grief, I felt and indulged, while he was immediately a part of me; but I hope he will get the better of every thing, and never have reaſon to ſigh, as much as he does now from conſtitution.

I am to ſit, for the firſt time, to Huſſey, on Saturday: he has been engaged every day ſince I came to town. I repent of my folly already, but do not know how to get off: indeed I think it a very great one, to have *my* picture drawn, eſpecially as you cannot take it with you—But it is too late to help it now, and I muſt go on with the farce.

As your affairs are in ſuch an irregular way, I ſuppoſe you will not ſtay long at Hermitage. Let me know when you intend coming to town. I wiſh I were to change my lodgings every time you leave me! for I can neither ſleep or wake, without having your idea continually before me; nor can I ſit or walk in any part of the houſe, without recol-

lecting

lecting that you ſat or walked there, at ſuch or ſuch a time. As this local memory is but a kind of interruption to the conſtant remembrance I have always of you, independant of time or place, I am ſometimes tempted to take up my abode in the kitchen, where (to the beſt of my knowledge) you never were, that I may be free to think of you, without regard to particular circumſtances, or material objects.

I have, with great care and attention, read about half of *Brown; but I muſt give him a ſecond reading, before I pretend to deliver my opinion, or communicate my remarks.

Your brother and ſiſter are come to dine with me. I cannot ſay they interrupt me, as I have nothing farther to add, but that I am, and ever will be, your's.

FRANCES.

* On the Characteriſtics.

LETTER CCLXVII.

Dear FANNY, *Clogher.*

HERE am I at the † Biſhop's houſe, quite alone, and ſhall be ſo 'till Monday next, when the family return from Enniſkillen. I met ſome of the ſervants of this houſe about ſix miles off, and they acquainted me with the ſtate of matters here; which would have been hint enough for any reaſonable man to turn back upon; but, you know, it was rather a matter for me to rejoice at, that I ſhould have ſo much time to myſelf, my books, papers, and muſic. The ſervants, who are left behind, are the higher ſort; and, as we are unfortunately old acquaintance, they fall foul on me,

† Doctor Clayton.

from miſtaken kindneſs, at an unmerciful rate. The butler was immediately for ſending to the parſon of the pariſh, "to notify the arrival of a "relation and friend of the Biſhop's, who was in "ſuch a *loneſome* way, that it would pity one's "heart to ſee it." But, upon inquiry, I found this man would not go away, when I bid him, nor take a denial, if he aſked me to go home with him; and, not being at the top of his preferment in this dioceſe, I begged to be excuſed from the over-abounding of his civility. My friend, the butler, then apprehending that I thought the parſon too grave and wiſe for me, (for he could not get it into his head, that a man ſhould chuſe to be alone) recommended the Biſhop's agent to me; who, he ſaid, would much delight me, as he was a brave, jolly batchelor, like myſelf, and could crack a bottle and a joke with any man. I aſked him, whether this man would give me any of my Lord's money, without his leave? and, being anſwered No, I ſaid I deſired no acquaintance with him.

Lady O—— and I had a good deal of converſation about you, the day before I came away. She ſpoke very handſomely of you, and kindly too. She ſaid alſo, that you had but a ſlight conſtitution, and was ſubject to low ſpirits often; which ſhe attributed to irregularity of hours, late at night and morning, and recommended to me to take ſome care about that matter for you. She aſſured me, that ſhe was herſelf ſo ſenſible of the good effect of riſing early, that, as ſhe has naturally a great flow of ſpirits, which were firſt owing to early hours, ſhe is now obliged to lie in bed, ſome time longer than ſhe is inclined, leſt ſhe ſhould run wild about the country, to the utter ſcandal and aſtoniſhment of all her neighbours.

Adieu!

LETTER CCLXVIII.

I Congratulate my dear Harry on the unexpected indulgence, which his taſte for retirement has met with. I am not at all ſurprized that you neither returned to hermitage, nor accepted the company that has been offered you at Clogher; for I am well aware how pleaſant it muſt be to a mind like your's, to be allowed the free exerciſe of its own faculties. I have often looked with great pity, not intirely unmixed with contempt, on very good kind of people, for ſeeming to be utter ſtrangers to the pleaſures of *ſelf-ſociety*; for I will not call it ſolitude to be ſometimes alone. However, I hope your contemplative amuſements are, by this time, heightened into the joys of a rational converſe, by the Biſhop's return. I am ſure he is a ſenſible man, from the friendſhip that has ſo long ſubſiſted between you, and the manner you always ſpeak of him in.

I am much obliged to dear Lady O—— for the expreſſions, as well as proofs of regard, ſhe has honoured me with. There is really ſomething extraordinary in her attachment, for indeed I cannot plead the leaſt merit to her friendſhip; yet I hope, and believe, I ſhall ever retain it; for I am well convinced, I muſt be highly to blame, whenever I forfeit it.

I am very certain, that you and ſhe are quite right with regard to early hours: but I would not diſgrace the goodneſs of her heart, as well as underſtanding, to ſuppoſe her chearful ſpirits ariſe merely from conſtitution. Believe me, that, in order to ſupport them, ſhe has had recourſe to religion and philoſophy: nor has her high ſtation exempted her from wanting their aid. May both you and ſhe ever retain that ſenſible chearfulneſs,

which ſo well becomes ye! which, though you modeſtly aſcribe to regularity and early hours, has its effect from another cauſe, a conſciouſneſs of acting right, and a mind filled with "that ſweet "peace which goodneſs boſoms ever."

I will not however pretend to deny, that, in ſuch conſtitutions as mine, irregularity may weaken the faculties of the mind, as well as the body, and diffuſe a laſſitude and heavineſs over both; Providence having ordained, for their mutual preſervation, that what injures the one, ſhall immediately, or remotely affect the other. This ſentiment may be carried a great way, even to the mental vices of envy, avarice, &c. and every perſon, who has ever felt ſickneſs or pain, muſt know, "we are not "ourſelves, when nature, being oppreſſed, com-"mands the mind to ſuffer with the body."

Adieu!

FRANCES.

LETTER CCLXIX.

My dear FANNY,

ALL alone ſtill, in my own kingdom; where, though I have no very extenſive ſway, I have thoſe ſubjects to govern, that ſhould be the firſt eſſay of a monarch's politics, namely, my own paſſions and foibles.* I might have anſwered your letter laſt poſt, but declined it; as I had not time to do it *juſtice*, to ſpeak ſtill in the kingly ſtile.

I am extremely pleaſed, when you anſwer my letters properly, by entering into the ſpirit and ſubject of them, which indeed you can do ſo well; not with "I received yours, and for anſwer ſay."

* Si vis omnia tibi ſubjici, teipſum ſubjice rationi. SEN.

A cor-

A correſpondence ſhould be properly a converſation; not mere queſtion and anſwer. I often juſt hint at ſubjects, and leave them imperfect, to give you occaſion to complete them; and I am vexed and diſappointed, when you neglect it, out of lazineſs or diffidence; for it muſt be owing to either of theſe, whenever I am diſappointed. You have ſometimes told me, that I over-awe you, from an apprehenſion of my ſuperior underſtanding; ſo that, in writing or ſpeaking to me, you have not always the full exerciſe of your own powers. Now, for argument's ſake, we will let this paſs; but then believe me, Fanny, if I remember right, I had not ſo refined and ſpeculative ſenſe, as you have now, when I was at your age. All the improvement, I have ever made to it, has been almoſt ſince that time; and a practiſed wreſtler may be able to overcome an inexperienced man of greater natural abilities. You are now in a ſtate and ſtage of life, proper to improve yourſelf, and may have this advantage over me, that you can have the help of one, who has lately travelled through the road you are to go; ſo that I hope, in return, to have your aſſiſtance, as your underſtanding will be at the height, when mine, from the courſe of nature, will be on the decline. This I ſhould look upon as a ſort of triumph, of the moſt flattering kind, namely, a conqueſt over myſelf; that is, my better part overcoming my worſe. Beſides, you have the advantage of a chaſte and religious education, which will the ſooner enable you to reach the only end I have ever propoſed from my ſtudies, to make me rather a *better*, than a *wiſer* man. Moral philoſophy may reform our manners, and ſubdue our paſſions; but ſlowly the one, and with a conſtant ſtruggle the other; while religion effects the firſt at once, and the latter with eaſe, by ſubſtituting more charming pleaſures in their ſtead.

This

This is the moſt romantic place I ever ſaw: there are not two hundred yards of level ground in the whole country; for it is compoſed of an infinite number of green hills, lying ſo cloſe to each other, that it reſembles a codlin pye in a bowl-diſh. So that the nurſe's ſtory of giants, of old, ſtepping from one hill to another, round the country, would not appear an improbable tale here. It is much the ſame way at Hermitage too, and, in general, through all thoſe parts of this country, I have yet ſeen.

I hope you are reading Brown upon the Characteriſtics, and writing notes upon it: I am ſure you are, becauſe I deſired it. I ſhould be glad to have your opinion upon the definition of virtue, given in the laſt lines of the third ſection of the ſecond eſſay, upon the moral obligations of man to virtue. I give you fair play, by telling you that I think this definition falſe and imperfect; and only aſk you, how it is ſo. Read the firſt, ſecond, and third ſections carefully, before you give your opinion; not that you will diſcover the error from them, but they will help you to judge the better.

This is a ſevere trial of my dear pupil; for, I own, when firſt I read the book, I was fully ſatisfied with the definition: and, to give you ſome help in this matter, I agree that he has ſhewn the imperfection of the other three definitions of virtue; but yet I ſay, he has given a more imperfect and dangerous one himſelf.

Adieu my Life!

HENRY.

LETTER CCLXX.

IN the diſagreeable and embarraſſed ſituation I am at preſent, I know nothing could tempt me to write, but the fear of your thinking I poorly declined the taſk you have aſſigned me, without being ingenuous enough to confeſs myſelf unequal to it. I had gone through the whole eſſay on the obligations of man to virtue, before I received your letter; and had remarked the definition you mention, to be as *imperfect* as any of thoſe, he terms *ſo:* for which reaſon, I had contented myſelf with thinking that virtue is not to be defined; and had taken up ſo much of Dr. Clarke's opinion, as to believe, that though, like the certainty of an Almighty Being, it cannot be reduced to terms, or fully proved and explained by words, yet is it ſelf-evident to every rational creature. Brown ſays, virtue conſiſts "in the conformity of our affections "with the public good, and the voluntary pro-"duction of the greateſt happineſs." If, by the public, he means all human kind, he might have explained it by *univerſal benevolence*; which is ſo far from excluding the natural or moral ties, that it certainly ſtrengthens them.

"Friends, parents, neighbours firſt it will embrace,
"Its country next,—and next all human race."

But, if he confines his idea of the public to a particular nation or people, he doubtleſs makes virtue of a variable and indeterminate nature; and, at once, deſtroys his own ſyſtem, and its exiſtence: for, though the love of our country is certainly a very noble and proper principle; yet, as the intereſts of every nation and people vary, what may be virtuous with regard to the advantages of one, may be highly criminal, by becoming prejudicial to

to another. This therefore, cannot be the true criterion of virtue: its effects muſt be uniform, independent of time or place as it is itſelf the ſame in the vale of Sancone, or the palace of Verſailles.

I am ſtill more diſpleaſed at the latter part of his definition, "the voluntary *production* of the "greateſt happineſs." As this may be underſtood, poorly confining virtue to the particular ſtations of affluence or power. I cannot think this was the author's meaning; yet, as it may be wreſted to this point, I think it is dangerouſly expreſſed; for it may tend to diſcourage the exerciſe of virtue in thoſe, who have it not in their power to do great or generous actions.

I have now given my dear preceptor the higheſt proof of my obedience to his commands; and, as we are told in ſcripture, that "obedience is better than ſacrifice," I hope he will accept the will for the deed. Believe me, my deareſt life, I have never been ſo much hurt at the conſciouſneſs of my own weakneſs, as at this moment. I know I have expoſed it; but I know I have an indulgent maſter, who will forgive and inſtruct me. From the firſt of our correſpondence, I have ever declined writing, though I was vain enough of my capacity in that way before; but the perfection of your letters has ſhewn me my inſufficiency in ſuch a glaring light, that I never ſit down to anſwer a letter of yours, without bluſhing. You ſay, I am now "at an age, and in a ſtate of life, to admit "improvement" My age is doubtleſs on your ſide, but my ſituation much againſt you. The quickneſs of my apprehenſion, which is, or ſhould be my beſt help to ſtudy, is turned to melancholy proſpects, and my attention to any thing I read, continually interrupted, as I never am one moment alone.

I am

I am aſhamed to ſend this letter. I would not let it go, but for fear you ſhould think me lazy. Adieu, Life, Love, adieu!

FRANCES.

LETTER CCLXXI.

My dear pet,

YOU cannot imagine what pleaſure your *critique* upon Brown gives me. Your ſentiments are extremely clever and juſt, and would become a greater adept in philoſophy, than you are; but are really ſurprizing for a young woman upon ſo abſtruſe a ſubject. I am pleaſed to find, that your remarks have taken a different turn from mine, though we both agree in the ſame opinion; and am glad I did not ſee your's, before I wrote my own, leſt I ſhould have reſted there, and thought that no farther criticiſm was neceſſary upon the ſubject.

Indeed, my dear, I intreat you to exert your talents a little oftener in this way; for you may be aſſured, that, if I did not think you equal to the taſk, I would not recommend it to you. Your ſhort and impartial character is this: you have a very good natural underſtanding, a lively fancy, a quick apprehenſion, and an eaſy expreſſion. Your judgment is rather delicate than ſtrong, and may be better ſtiled a refined taſte than a logical reaſon. In ſhort, you need no farther helps from nature; and all the aſſiſtance you want from art, is to be directed to a courſe of reading, proper to furniſh you with ſubjects fit for your reflection; and a lettered converſe, to exerciſe your mind, till it attains

that

that health and vigour, which it is originally capable of.

Adieu, my life!

REMARKS upon Brown's definition of VIRTUE, in his Eſſay upon the CHARACTERISTICKS.

"VIRTUE is the voluntary production of "the greateſt happineſs." See the laſt line of Section third.

This definition I look upon to be more imperfect, and of a more dangerous tendency, than any of the three preciſions he has ſo ingeniouſly proved the inſufficiency of. According to Mr. Brown's preciſion, a man may diſinherit his children to endow an hoſpital. All Europe might have been involved in a war, if a certain neighbouring prince had not an heir. But would it therefore have become the confeſſor to have got the princeſs with child? this definition gives latitude to a dangerous principle in an old Latin ſentence; *cum vitia proſint, peccat qui recte facit:* In ſhort, I think that Mr. Brown, both here, and in his obligations of man to virtue, argues more like a *politician* than a *divine*; regarding the *end*, without reſpecting the *means*.

But there are actions which all men agree about to be ſins, which the ſchool divinity ſtiles *ſpecifick*, and St. Auſtin ſays, *multa prohibita ſunt quia mala*, i. e. *in ſe*, mala. The ſcripture forbids us to do *evil*, even though *good* ſhould come of it: now if the *production* of happineſs conſtitutes the nature of virtue, how can that action be deemed *bad*, which tends to *good?* This text then might make one ſuſpect, at leaſt, that there was ſuch a thing as *irrelative* vice, that changed not its nature upon becoming a *relative* virtue. I think it a dangerous opinion,

opinion, that virtue is not a *reality*, but a *name*: I am perſuaded that we have an original idea of moral truth and beauty, transfuſed into the ſoul by our Great Creator; which to diſtinguiſh from the natural perceptions we have of harmony in muſic, or proportion in matter, may be ſtiled by the name of conſcience. It is a ſenſation we are affected with, previous to all reaſoning with regard to our own happineſs, or that of others. It is an impreſſion originally framed in our minds, which like the appetites of the body, we feel ourſelves moved by, without regard to the ends for which they were ordained. In truth, the firſt is a divine impulſe, as the latter is a natural motive, but neither of them a philoſophic deduction.

All men, it is ſaid, are not ſenſible of this moral perception in themſelves; let us ſay then, that thoſe who are bleſt with it, are affected not by what Shaftſbury ſtiles *taſte*, but by what the divines better term *grace*.

I am ſure that Mr. Brown does not mean to ſay, that there is not really ſuch a thing as abſtract virtue, tho' he would unkindly deſtroy that pleaſing opinion, ſo flattering to the dignity of human nature, and ſo inducive to its ethicks, that we have an original ſenſe of it.

If then there is ſuch a thing as abſtract virtue in the great exemplar, is it not more agreeable to our notions of the divine wiſdom and goodneſs, that he ſhould imbue our ſouls with a natural tincture of this charming idea, than that he ſhould leave it to be groped out through the puzzled labyrinths of human reaſon, or hazard its foundation upon the various and contradictory ſyſtems of bungling politicians?

I agree indeed, that reflection may be neceſſary to direct its operation, but not to create its nature; and that reaſoning may form *relative*, but not

not *abſolute* virtue; as arithmetick may multiply or divide figures, but can neither make or alter the nature of number.

If it be objected that I have given no explicit definition of virtue, as the calling it an idea is no preciſion, I anſwer, that as it is of the eſſence of God, no terms can adequately expreſs it: It is a certain *afflatus divinus*, or inward working of the ſpirit, which we may feel, without being able to deſcribe; for it is, as I ſaid before, an impulſe, not a reflection; for reaſon, if left to itſelf, as in ſome inſtances given above, with regard to the greater publick good, would often betray us into vice or miſtake, if we had not a certain conſciouſneſs, or original idea to guide ourſelves by.

Brown tells us, that virtue is the *voluntary production of the greateſt happineſs*, but when we aſk him what ſhall direct us to that amiable end, he is ſilent: Then Clark tells us, that reaſon muſt be our guide; when I enquire what is reaſon? Woolaſton cries truth; and when I aſk for a definition of truth, Shaftſbury refers me to idea; which idea I attribute to a ſuperior ſpirit, or emanation of the divine light or grace, which impreſſes a conviction upon our conſciences, of certain moral truths and obligations which are previous to, and independent on human reaſon or reflection, and therefore permanent, and fixed in their own nature.

Now I do not mean, by any thing I have ſaid, either to ſuperſede the uſe of reaſon to guide our actions, or the neceſſity of revelation to influence them: but thus I argue, that if the exerciſe of moral virtue be our higheſt and pureſt pleaſure here, and that this pleaſure proceeds not from the great and glorious idea of abſolute, ſpecifick, *irrelative* excellence, but merely from a regard to publick or private happineſs, here or hereafter; what

what enjoyment can we have in this contemplation, which we muſt ſuppoſe to be the bliſs of angels, when the opportunity of exerciſing this virtue, and its relation to all happineſs ſhall be finally at an end? The joys of the next world we are to ſuppoſe, conſiſt in the intuition of the divine preſence, in the contemplation of abſolute beauty, harmony and truth, abſtract and *irrelative*: In this world then, we are, not only to purchaſe the reward, but to prepare ourſelves for the enjoyment of it; and without ſuch an original *irrelative* ſenſe, we ſhould be unbleſt in any heaven but a Mahometan one.

"Ariſtotle ſays, that virtue hath no reaſon, by "which he means that it is indeed prior to all rea- "ſon; yet it may be ſaid to have it, becauſe it "hearkens to it, and is, in reſpect of the reaſon- "able part, as a ſon is in reſpect of his father, "who is governed by his inſtructions."* M. Paſchal, ſeems to be at a loſs for a certain definition of virtue: he ſays the port is a guide for mariners, but what ſhall direct us to the haven of virtue? upon which M. Voltaire, whom I take to be both a ſuperficial writer, and a ſlight philoſopher, anſwers him, *extempore*, "Do as you would "be done by." According to which rule, you ſhould reſcue a thief from the gallows, becauſe you would be glad that any one ſhould do the ſame for you, in like circumſtances. Here Paſchal ſeems rather to be in ſearch of the *example* than the *rule*, for though the haven is the end your voyage aims at, yet it is not that which directs your courſe: but he has unawares made a very apt alluſion to the proper ſtate of this queſtion, for virtue, like the loadſtone, is a power in the hands of our Creator, as yet inexplicable by human reaſon.

* Gaſſendi.

Here a letter is miſſing.

LETTER CCLXXII.

AS my dear Harry knows the uneaſineſs which his ſilence gives me, I cannot help ſaying it is more than unkind, it is abſolutely cruel, to neglect writing. There was a report laſt week, that you died ſuddenly. I heard it laſt Friday; and my not receiving a letter from you that day, almoſt diſtracted me. Though your letters are the moſt ſenſible and elegant pleaſure I can receive in your abſence, yet is my affection ſo much ſtronger than my underſtanding, that I would willingly give up the entertainment they afford me, to be certain of a ſingle line by every poſt, which ſhould barely tell me you are well. I know it is a weakneſs to expect ſuch punctuality; but it is the natural effect of a *greater*, the having ſo entirely given up my heart, as to render my happineſs wholly dependent on another; a truſt, for which (contrary to the general opinion) you can, with eaſe, give me ſufficient ſecurity.

I received your two letters of the former poſts; and think it is really ſomething extraordinary, that a perſon, who was bred and has lived like you, ſhould, at your time of life, immerſed in buſineſs, and involved in diſagreeable circumſtances, without any outward call, or viſible help, become ſo great a proficient in the ſcience, which to the generality of the world appears ſo tedious and abſtruſe, as to deter them from being at all acquainted with it; and in which many learned (and from thence called wiſe) men have paſſed their lives, without either making themſelves, or the world, one whit the better for it. In ſhort, I look upon it as a particular mark of the Almighty's goodneſs,

that

that has been pleaſed to give you a turn of mind, which muſt render you ſuperior to the common accidents of life; and that he has thought proper to make you an inſtance, among the few, that neither riches, power, nor honours are neceſſary to conſtitute the real happineſs of a rational being; ſince, with a taſte and reliſh for them all, yet unpoſſeſſing any of them, your ſtate is infinitely preferable to thoſe, who, in the full enjoyment of them all, are unbleſt with true religion and philoſophy.

May my ſweet love long taſte thoſe bleſſings which virtue can alone beſtow! and may it, both in this world and the next, be to him an addition of his bliſs, that he has made me better, wiſer, and, of courſe, happier!

Adieu, my heart's, my ſoul's dear Harry!

HIATUS.

LETTER CCLXXIII.

YOU tell me that your picture is improved into your own likeneſs at laſt; then take it home immediately, leſt the painter ſhould attempt to cheat me with a Helen of Guido's.

Poetry and painting, they ſay, are ſiſter arts; but Huſſey has ſo raiſed my jealouſy by his ſucceſs, that I ſhall endeavour to make them rivals too.

Character of FANNY.

With all of wit that nature can beſtow,
And more of ſenſe, than ev'n her ſenſe can know:
Her heart a mine, by modeſty conceal'd,
Untaught to glow, till love the gem reveal'd:

With

With tenderneſs, and converſe ſweet, to prove
At once the joys and calm delights of love:
Her fancy lively, and her judgment true;
Perfect in nature, and in morals too:
Her air coquettiſh, but her mind a prude;
Her body wanton, but her ſoul not lewd:
Rivals by turns, her mind and perſon charms,
Allays the lover, and the huſband warms:
Who pleas'd at firſt, and yet at laſt pleas'd more;
My future hope, and yet my preſent ſtore.
Theſe are thy worth; not dow'r told down in gold,
Too dearly purchas'd for thy merit ſold.
Thy virtues, not my art, theſe numbers frame,
Oh! more my inſpiration than my theme! *

HENRY.

* Tantus eras vates, tanta eſt Lucretia. An ipſum
Hoc ille dederas: an dedit illa tibi?
FRAG. EPIG. JUL. SCAL.

HIATUS.

LETTER CCLXXIV.

My dear FANNY,

YOU deſired to hear from me on Friday; but thoſe, who love, are fond of works of ſupererogation.

I am reading one of the books I brought away from you, intitled Manners, and am well pleaſed with it. I remember the reaſon of my throwing it aſide, when I bought it for you, was, upon looking a little into it, I obſerved the author had alluded to a great number of private characters, to illuſtrate general theorems; and as I had ſometimes met with many inſipid moral novels of that kind, I conceived a prejudice againſt the book: but I find from this author, that when ſuch a manner

is

is managed with wit and addreſs, it gives a certain vivacity to this kind of writing, and ſtrengthens the ſtile, by adding action to reaſon.

What incited my inclination to read this book, was a paragraph in the public papers, that it had given great offence in France, where it was written, and that there was likely to be a proſecution againſt the author; and, as far as I have gone, I find it has a merit in it very apt to give offence to prieſts and bigots. The writer is, I think, a man of ſenſe, learning, parts, and unprejudiced reflection. I am, therefore, highly pleaſed to find he is of the ſame opinion with me, of an innate idea of irrelative virtue; which is a ſentiment I am ſo charmed with, that I am fond of laying hold on every occaſion of diſcourſing about it. So I ſhall here take a ſlight at it again.

We have, from the mere bounty of nature, a ſmell for flavours, a taſte for ſavours, a ſight for ſymmetry, an hearing for ſounds, and a feeling for more ſenſual gratifications. Shall then the goodneſs, nay the juſtice of God, leave us void of as immediate a ſenſation of virtue, which is a thing of ſo much higher conſequence, both to ourſelves and others, and both with regard to this life and the next? Shall I ſay, the bounty of God be greater than his juſtice? Shall our inſtinct faculties be governed by a divine impulſe, and ſhall our moral powers be left without a guide? for human reaſon is inſufficient to form the rule, though it's proper province is to be exerciſed, and converſant about it.

But the ſenſes are only the organs to convey ideas to the mind; it is the ſoul, which perceives. Brutes then have a ſoul: they have alſo a ſpirit, if you give me leave to make a diſtinction here; for matter, of itſelf, is inactive. There are ſo many inſtances in brutes of what we partially ſtile mimic reaſon, that mankind has no great cauſe to be vain

upon the ſole prerogative of this excellence; ſince all we can claim is but a higher degree of this boaſted ſuperiority.

But we are taught to believe that God formed man after his own image: this favour ſurely was not ſhewn in his human figure, which Diogenes humourouſly ridiculed, by plucking a gooſe, and leading it through the ſtreets of Athens, crying, "Behold Plato's man!" which that philoſopher had defined to be a two-legged animal without feathers*. Nor can this glorious characteriſtic be preſumed from any one quality, which brutes have in any degree or analogy with us. What then is this great diſtinction, upon which we do, and ought ſo juſtly to value ourſelves, but a certain, innate, moral ſenſe, which, as the ſerpent expreſſes it, "makes us as Gods, knowing good from evil?"

Brutes are capable of virtue, according to the common ſenſe of it; for many of their actions demonſtrate love, gratitude, and benevolence: and though, when the ſpaniel beats the field for our ſport or food, he may be conſidered as acting merely for his own pleaſure; this is no more than ſome moraliſts have charged upon human virtue, which they have reſolved into a ſelf-ſatisfaction. In ſhort, it is an innate, moral idea, which makes us *ſenſible* of virtue; while reaſon and free will only make us *capable* of it.

As ſoon as I have read this book, I will ſend it up to you.

Adieu, my faireſt Idea!

* Animal bipes, et implume.

LETTER CCLXXV.

My dear FANNY,

I WOULD not tell you any thing of the matter, 'till it was over; but I left town with a ſore throat, which increaſed very faſt upon me, laſt night; but I am this morning, thank God, as well as ever, and am juſt ſetting out for your own Maidenhall.

I have gone a good way in *manners*; and, upon a farther view of that author, I begin to find the ſame fault with him, which I did at firſt. His characters are too frequently introduced, are tedious, and ill drawn, and many of them not at all to the purpoſe. However, there are here and there, certain traits of genius, which, upon the whole, make the work appear to have been written by two different perſons; or rather, I have taken it into my head, that it was wrote by a woman, who had, for ſome time, converſed freely with ſenſible men.

The author, authors, or compiler of this book ſpeak very rationally againſt the doctrine of eternal miſery; which is a matter, I think, I have in ſome of my letters, given my opinion upon; and is a ſubject I am ſo fond of, that I ſhall venture to ſpeak the ſentiments, which at preſent occur to me on that head, without waiting to recollect whether I have ſaid the ſame things to you before or no, or whether any one elſe has ſaid them before me.

The doctrine of eternal miſery eſtabliſhes the empire of the devil; for twenty men muſt be damned, for one that can be ſaved, upon the orthodox chriſtian ſcheme; and the mediator has ſuffered in vain.

Suppoſe, during the millennium of the juſt, there ſhould be a millennium of the unjuſt——don't you think a thouſand years ſufferings may make ſuffi-

cient atonement to divine juſtice? And I think the popiſh doctrine of purgatory only abſurd in the opinion, that any merits of the living can avail the dead there. However, this wild notion may be conſidered as a *pious fraud* to be of ſervice in religion, as it multiplies our inducements to devotion —As for example; if I thought my dear Fanny was receiving many ſtripes there for her croſſneſs to me, no Anchorite ever led ſuch an exemplary life, as I ſhould, to reſcue my own ſpoiled Pet.

Infinite juſtice, they ſay, requires infinite ſatisfaction. Perhaps this is only a quibble upon words: but, to take it their own way, has not the mediator's ſufferings already given this infinite ſatisfaction? and muſt every miſerable wretch, who dies in ſin, become an additional victim to infinite juſtice? In ſhort, this ſhocking doctrine ſeems rather to be a piece of prieſt's rage, than divine wrath; and is ſuch a blaſphemous opinion of the Godhead, as exceeds almoſt any of thoſe lay crimes, they anathematize ſo vehemently and preſumptuouſly at the ſame time; and are not aware that they reduce God to a kind of fate, while, by extending his juſtice, they limit his mercy, and ſo peremptorily deſtroy the power of free will in the exerciſe of his attributes. But I cannot let this *infinite* ſatisfaction paſs by ſo quietly, without ſhewing that it proves nothing, by proving too much; for infinite ſatisfaction muſt be infinite every way, in degree as well as duration; then this deſtroys the equitable rule of proportionable puniſhments; for the leaſt crime requires ſatisfaction, infinite ſatisfaction, infinite in degree, and infinite in duration—ſo that a man muſt be made a God, before he can be rendered capable of giving ſuch *infinite* ſatisfaction.

I have not done with this ſubject, and ſhall reſume it in my next; for the poſt is juſt going out. Adieu, my own Fanny! Read and write my charming

ing pupil, while I endeavour to reflect that light back again upon you, which you firſt inſpired me with.

LETTER CCLXXVI.

My dear FANNY,

I AM juſt come home. My uncle is as uſual; or, as ſome man conſtrued Queen Anne's motto, *ſemper eadem*, worſe and worſe.

Every thing here in a backward and neglected way—Why do not you come down, and ſet matters to rights? I hope in God I ſhall not be long the only ſlave in your affairs. I have many things to take care of; and there is but one perſon, I can, or ſhould chuſe to confide in, and her help I am deprived of. O my ſoul, keep ſtedily to your philoſophy! for my old friend Providence will not forſake you.

I have finiſhed *manners*, and ſtill think of that book, as I did in my laſt; and could point out ſeveral paſſages, to ſhew that it is rather a collection, than an original work. I do not mean from his general reaſoning; which, if right, cannot avoid being the ſame with others, who, have wrote juſtly upon the ſame ſubject; but what I would inſtance, are particular turns of thought and expreſſion, which I have met with before. There is one among them taken from Monteſquieu's Perſian Letters: "That it appears more reaſonable, the mi-"nority, inſtead of the majority, ſhould deter-"mine a queſtion; for ten men think wrong, for "one who judges right." The only difference between this whim in the *Lettres Perſanes*, and this book, is, that Monteſquieu only threw out this ſentiment as a ſtroke of fancy; but our moraliſt

ſeems to advance it as a grave argument, and ſupports it by a text from Exodus, diſingenuouſly quoted. His words are, that the Jewiſh legiſlator adviſes us "not to paſs our judgment according to "the opinion of the greater number;" which words do certainly ſupport his ridiculous argument: but obſerve the literal words of the text, and you will ſee how unfairly he deals with it. "Thou "ſhalt not follow a multitude, *to do evil*; neither "ſhalt thou ſpeak in a cauſe, to decline after "many, *to wreſt judgment.*" Exod. xxii. 2.

Adieu!

HENRY.

LETTER CCLXXVII.

I HAVE but juſt time to tell my ſweet love that I have ſpent the greateſt part of this day with my dear lady.—She came to town on Sunday night, and ſent to me yeſterday. Indeed ſhe is a charming woman.

I am ſorry for your uncle's diſorder, but am afraid he is incurable. I am ſure I need not ſay how earneſtly I wiſh to ſhare and alleviate your every diſtreſs and fatigue: but, tho' I am, at preſent, denied that happineſs, I will rely on that Providence, who can, and will, in his good time, remove every obſtacle, that prevents my leſſening your inquietudes, by taking that ſhare in them, which is immediately my right; and which I would not part with, nor exchange, for any title, that could put me into the poſſeſſion of power, wealth and honours.

I could ſay more, much more upon this ſubject, but hear the tinkling of the poſt man's bell; therefore muſt conclude truly and affectionately your's,

FRANCES.

LETTER CCLXXVIII.

Dear FANNY,

I FORGOT to mention to you, in my laſt, another remarkable paſſage in our moral Plagiariſt; even Pope's much-admired ſimile of a ſtone thrown into a ſtanding lake, verbatim, except the rhyme.

But let us have done with him, for he interrupted me laſt poſt in the proſecution of my argument upon eternal miſery; and how, or how far, I reaſoned upon that ſubject, I do not recollect at preſent; for I have been deep involved in affairs of this world, ſince I came home: but I ſhall proceed as thoughts now occur, without regard to order; as you know I take the liberty with you of making my letters a ſort of common-place book.

I am not ignorant that the Scriptures are full of penal threats; but I do not remember that they are denounced to all eternity: nay I think the contrary is implied in a text, which the popiſh clergy quote for purgatory; "there to remain, 'till thou "haſt paid the uttermoſt farthing." It is an alluſion made to the ſtate of a debtor. I am afraid that even eternal happineſs is not fully promiſed in the Scriptures, which ſurely is a more reaſonable faith than the other; and that this glorious hope is rather a *moral* preſumption than a *divine* Revelation. —Our principal arguments upon this head are drawn from the perfect goodneſs of God, the analogy running through all his works, the natural frame of the human ſoul, it's frequent fatiety of all worldly enjoyments, it's earneſt longings after ſome ſupreme, elevated, and complete bliſs, and a certain natural ſympathy, the virtuous and religious mind feels to be again allied to ſome more excellent nature, which it ſeems to have, as it were, a ſenſe of being lately ſeparated from. I think it may be rationally in-

ferred from all this, that, to ſatisfy the natural frame of ſuch a ſoul, it's bliſs muſt be eternal; for pleaſures not made to cloy, can give no ſatiety. Now extend, rather ſay *limit*, our heavenly bliſs to the millionth power of a millionth myriad of years, which is almoſt infinitely beyond the art of numbers to enumerate; yet even the immediate bliſs of the ſublimed ſpirit would be, from that reflection, rendered imperfect; as, the higher our happineſs in poſſeſſion, the more ſenſibly are we affected at even the moſt remote thought of parting with it. And I ſhould prefer my ſtate, even in this vile world, ſatiated with frail, mortal joys, and oppreſſed with life-long cares, but preſuming upon the great hope of a glorious immortality, to the moſt ſublime pleaſures of the next, limited in proſpect, even one thought ſhort of eternity. Shall we loſe our earneſt reliſh, our virtuous longing after immortality, in a ſtate of certain bliſs, which operates ſo emphatically in our ſouls, even while the vices of the body, and the corruption of the heart, occaſion that thought to be attended with a dread of what eternity we may be doomed to? or may the ſoul, in perfect bliſs, have one deſire ungratified? In ſhort, to bring this heart-tranſporting, metaphyſic-inſpiring ſubject as near to demonſtration as poſſible, let me preſume to argue thus: if the ſouls of men are not immortal, God has granted us leſs happineſs, than we are naturally made capable of, which is contrary to our notion of God, "with whom is fulneſs of joy, and pleaſure for "evermore."

Thus man has a natural præ-ſentiment of future bliſs, and a rational deduction of it's eternity; but he has neither the one or the other with regard to future miſery, or it's eternity. The only dread, which appears to me natural to the mind of man, is that very ſhocking one of annihilation.

What

What I mean is, that man has not any natural forebodings of future miſery, tho' his reaſon may draw ſome inference about it: but then this reaſon can never conclude for eternal puniſhments. So that this doctrine reſts merely upon what revelation is made about it; which as I hinted before, does not denounce them eternal, at leaſt the *miſery*.

Nay I think farther, that, tho' rewards may be agreeable to divine juſtice, puniſhments are not. If I remember right, I ſaid ſomething upon this ſubject to you in a * former letter, by alluding to human laws; ſo ſhall inſiſt on it no farther here: but, to take away all cavil from this paradox, and to treat the ſubject more equally, I ſhall deny that either rewards or puniſhments, tho' allowed in the moral ſenſe, are agreeable to divine goodneſs or juſtice, in the legiſlative ſenſe.

I would not hazard this ſubject, ſo unfiniſhed, to any hands but your's, as I am obliged to break off in a very dangerous criſis; but the night is far ſpent, and next poſt ſhall be employed to extract the poiſon.

Adieu, thou ſole partner of my heart, and only confidante of all it's ſentiments!

HENRY.

* Letter CLXXVII.

LETTER CCLXXIX.

I DO remember the plagiary you mention: and indeed it is the only paſſage I can recollect of the whole book. I beg you'll ſend it me by the firſt opportunity.

The remaining part of your letter is upon ſo very high, and nice a ſubject, that your ſaying you have not done with it, is not perhaps, my only reaſon for not beginning with it. I confeſs myſelf

ſo great a coward, that, tho' I have many doubts with regard to particular points of faith, and ſcriptural tenets, I chuſe to continue in a ſtate of uncertainty, rather than expoſe thoſe ſcruples, either to my own, or any other perſon's reaſon: tho' nothing pleaſes me better than meeting with the ſentiments of others, upon thoſe matters, which my weak mind is not able to reconcile to itſelf. For this reaſon, tho' I make no return to your ſentiments on religious, or philoſophical ſubjects, I muſt beg you will take it for granted, that I am both improv'd, and delighted with them: and, when I ceaſe to be either, I will confeſs my ignorance, and honeſtly tell you ſo.

I have been in a continual hurry ſince I ſaw you: I have not had time either to read or write; don't ſcold, and I'll mend directly.

I hear that Bolingbroke has wrote a treatiſe in defence of ſuicide; and revis'd a book of Dr. Middleton's, intitled, *The Inefficacy of Prayer, to an immutable Being.* Theſe we may, I think, from their very titles, apprehend to be works of evil tendency, and ſuch as may do vaſt miſchief in the world; particularly as ſuicide is the national vice of our gloomy countrymen. But let any one, who reads the treatiſe, look back on the circumſtances of the author's life, and they will, at once, convince us of the inſincerity he muſt have uſed on this ſubject; as there have been few perſons, who had greater temptations to illuſtrate ſuch arguments by example. Conſider him fallen from the higheſt grandeur, (except a throne) in one inſtant deprived of power, wealth, and honours; doom'd to baniſhment; his foes triumphant; his friends diſcarded, his character calumniated, and his body ſuffering under an irremediable diſorder! then tell me what prevented his ſeeking refuge in the arms of death, if he thought ſuicide no crime; or did not fear

ruſhing into the preſence of his judge, in the actual infringement of his laws?

Adieu, thou dear guide, and pattern of my life! from whom I derive my *little* goodneſs, and *great* happineſs. Adieu, my heart's dear Harry!

FRANCES.

Sequel of Letter CCLXXVIII.

LETTER CCLXXX.

I THINK then, with ſome ſenſible divines, that *rewards* and *puniſhments* are not beſtowed or inflicted upon our actions, good or bad; but that *happineſs* or *miſery* is the pre-ordained conſequence of virtue or vice; and that, as natural virtue or vice, as temperance and exerciſe, or intemperance and inactivity, produce health or diſeaſe in this world, ſo moral virtue or vice as eſſentially are attended with happineſs or miſery in the next.

Now, if our portions hereafter be *general moral conſequences*, and not *particular juſticiary adaptions*, I can perceive no reaſon why the ſoul of man ſhould be, at any time, precluded from redeeming itſelf by a thorough contrition, and ſincere repentance; or that a halter or a quinſey ſhall be ſufficient to deprive it of bliſs, to all eternity: for a ſpirit, at any period of it's exiſtence, reclaimed to a full and perfect ſenſe, love, and adoration of the eſſence, truth, goodneſs, and power of God, muſt *neceſſarily* attract to itſelf that happineſs, which is *eſſentially* allied to ſuch a ſtate of mind.

But ſome ſevere divines may here object, that a departed ſpirit can poſſibly have no *merit* in contrition or repentance, when temptation to ſin is no more, and when the conſequential miſery is demonſtratively aſcertained, and ſeverely experienced.

But the beginning of this letter may be referred to, where happineſs is ſaid to be the *conſequence* not the *reward* of virtue. And, as we are taught to believe that higher ſpirits than our's, have been plunged into the abyſs for ſin, in the next world; why may we not hope that a poor human ſoul may be capable of emerging from thence, by righteouſneſs hereafter? for ſurely religion is not limited, either in place or time, to the narrow bounds and ſhort duration of this paltry globe; but extends itſelf thro' the whole univerſe of intelligence, and ſhall continue to all eternity.

I look upon this life to be a ſtate of trial, and the next to be a ſtate of purgation, from which, perhaps, the moſt perfect man may not be exempt: for vengeance is not of the eſſence of God; but his nature is ſo pure, that no ſpirit may approach the throne of his Grace, obſcured by ſtain or blemiſh; and a ſtate of thorough purgation, that is, of ſincere repentance, without temptation to ſin, is neceſſary to prepare us for the bliſs of angels. So that I look upon the devil's empire to be of this world only, and not extended to the next; for here he may tempt, but there he cannot.

I think, then, that a ſoul purged from ſin, by any method, is a proper object of the divine favour. "Whom the Lord loveth, he chaſteneth." Can chaſtiſement then be deemed the effect of hatred, in the Lord, "who hateth nothing, which "he has made?" And does not a father cordially love a ſon, whom he has reclaimed by diſcipline? Is not the penitence of a ſinner accepted of by God, tho' effected by pain, poverty, or other misfortune in this life?

In ſhort, if puniſhments, or miſery, either judiciary or conſequential, be eternal, in any one inſtance, the devil has triumphed ſo far; which is blaſphemy: but, according to the ſeverity of ſome divines,

divines, there can be but a ſmall minority ſaved; which would look like a very poor compoſition for the Redeemer of mankind to make.

If this doctrine may appear to ſet men too free from terror, to influence their conduct toward a virtuous life, I ſhall conſider this ſubject in that light, in another letter; and do aſſure you, my deareſt Ally, that I am as ſincerely attached to you, as if I thought my ſalvation depended upon it.

Adieu!

HENRY.

LETTER CCLXXXI.

SINCE my laſt letter I have looked into the Bible, and find ſome paſſages, where eternal puniſhments are denounced: but then I find alſo ſeveral other places, where the words *eternal* and *everlaſting* are meant in a limited ſenſe, for a long and indefinite time. So that I think theſe texts do not preclude me from reaſoning upon this ſubject.

I own, the firſt thing which occurred to me, when I met with expreſſions in the Scripture, that ſeemed to ſhock my reaſon, and my idea of God, was, to ſuppoſe them only threats *in terrorem*; but then this alarmed me about the conſequence, which ſuch a ſurmiſe might draw after it, with regard to the promiſes mentioned in the ſame Scripture. However, upon recollection, I did not think this inference ſhould logically follow; for a promiſe is a contract, the virtuous man a purchaſer, and juſtice exacts the obligation: but the caſe is quite different with regard to threats. A Lord may ſay to his Steward, "'Tend well this farm 'till my "return, and I will make thee an inheritance out "of it; but, if you ſuffer the ſoil to be over-"grown with briars, I will cauſe thee to be flayed "alive."

" alive." Now, though the Lord muſt fulfil his promiſe out of juſtice, he ſurely may forgive the penalty out of mercy.

But I do not mean to inſiſt upon this argument; for, as the texts I hint at may be ſo interpreted as to agree with the reaſoning of my former letters, I ſhould be very tender of charging the leaſt diſingenuouſneſs upon the words of God; and, if they were expreſs and uncontrovertible in this or any other particular, againſt my ſenſe or opinion, I would, as becomes me, ſubmit my reaſon to my faith. And indeed, though the diſtinction I have made between promiſes and threats, ſufficiently proves that juſtice or reaſon does not require the completion of denounced vengeance, yet certainly *truth* requires that every thing ſhall be, as it is affirmed.

In order to help us the better to frame a judgment upon this ſubject, let us take the matter as high as we can, by beginning at original ſin; and yet all the curſe, we hear, upon that occaſion, ſeems to be temptation, labour, and death, (Geneſis iii. 15. and to the end.) That is, it may be apprehended, that the natural conſequence of the firſt parent's ſin was the debaſing human nature to a ſtate of frailty, mechanics, and mortality; which imperfect nature was, from thence, derived down to all their race: " For an evil tree bringeth forth " evil fruit."

Our Redeemer afterwards, at a certain time, (though reſolved from the beginning) takes our nature upon him, (and is thence ſtiled our ſecond Adam) by which benevolent and godlike condeſcenſion mankind was retrieved to their former dignity, ſo far as to be rendered capable of their former perfection, perhaps greater; in which the whole myſtery of the incarnation ſeems to lie, not in the unaccountable doctrine of ſatisfying the divine juſtice;

tice; which doctrine has perplexed the faith of many well diſpoſed chriſtians, and, perhaps, has prevented this religion from becoming as univerſal, as its other evidence, and moral perfection, ſeem to promiſe.

That mankind ſhould labour under guilt, for the ſin of our parents, and that they ſhould be redeemed by the ſacrifice of God; the firſt not our crime, and the latter not our merit; ſeems to be a ſcheme of Providence contrary to ſenſe or religion: but that a race of beings proceeding from Adam, after his fall, ſhould conſequentially be of too corrupt a nature to be capable of perfect bliſs; and that our Redeemer, becoming our ſecond parent, a man every way, (ſin only excepted) ſhould thereby reſtore that purity to our nature, as may render it capable of perfect happineſs, is, in my opinion, a doctrine agreeable to metaphyſical philoſophy, reconcileable to the nature of things, to the eternal laws of God; and likewiſe vindicates him from the charge of vengeance or partiality, as the whole conſequences ſeem to proceed from the original formation of things.

From all which reaſoning, I ſhall venture to conclude againſt eternal puniſhments: for, in the firſt inſtance, at the fall, even temporary ones are not threatened *in futuro*; and, in the ſecond inſtance, at man's redemption, if they became ſo then, how many wretched ſouls would be loſers by the bargain! and Chriſt may be ſaid to have overcome death only, by his ſacrifice, but not to have conquered ſin.

Theſe few thoughts occurring to me, when I ſat down to write, have obliged me to defer my promiſe in my laſt, 'till the next poſt.

Adieu!

HENRY.

LETTER CCLXXXII.

My dear FANNY, *Kilkenny.*

I AM now retired from the grand jury, to perform a promiſe I have delayed for ſome poſts, and think an aſſizes a proper time to diſcourſe about *judgment to come.*

When I firſt entered upon this ſubject, I own I trembled, as Felix did, for fear of the conſequence of my doctrine; therefore I canvaſſed the matter a good deal in my own mind, before I ventured to treat upon it even to you; though I was perfectly certain that the notion of eternal miſery could not add any thing to the ſtrength of your virtue, though it might, perhaps, take away ſomewhat of the merit of it. The reaſons, then, which ſuffered me to proceed, were theſe.

If I argued juſtly, which I endeavoured to do, I cannot apprehend any ill conſequence from my ſubject. Truth cannot injure truth; and error is not neceſſary to bring about the ends or deſigns of Providence.

I do not ſay that the propitiation of our Saviour was ſelf ſufficient to redeem us totally; but that it did not leave us in a worſe ſtate under the goſpel, than it found us under the law, (which, with regard to the many, it would have done, upon this doctrine;) and only enabled us to work out our own ſalvation, but I do not think it has limited the time.

I think that the ſevere divines endeavour to prove too much: for, as there is no proportional juſtice in eternal miſery, men may ſuſpect the whole ſcheme, from one flaw, to be but a pious fraud to deter from vice; but, when miſery is taught to be the *natural conſequence* of vice, damnation may appear to be unavoidable, unleſs the Great, Immutable

table Being ſhall contradict his eternal laws; which is abſurd, and ſtill leſs to be expected in favour of a ſinner.

The terror of eternal torments either drives men to deſpair, and ſo does more harm than good; or is balanced by the hope of mercy in proportion to its fear, and ſo is deſtroyed.

A man would certainly, with more prudence, put himſelf into the power of a provoked enemy, than expoſe himſelf naked to an eaſterly wind; becauſe, in one caſe, ſomething might be hoped from generoſity and mercy; but, in the other, he muſt expect the natural conſequence of his indiſcretion and folly.

I think the doctrine, as it ſtands in the orthodoxy, ſavours too much of human politics; and the mixing profane with ſacred things has often a dangerous tendency.

Some divines argue very unfairly, and uncomfortably too, upon the obligation of man to virtue, by attributing it to hope and fear; as if rewards and puniſhments were, like an *allay*, neceſſary to make the too refined idea of it permanent, and fit for uſe. But ſurely the love of virtue is not hope, nor is the abhorrence of vice, fear; though theſe very diſtinct ideas ſeem to be confounded by their definition.

I believe that any man, who has obſerved the leaſt upon the motions of the human mind, has, at ſeveral times of his life, perceived a certain impulſe to ſome actions, and a ſort of unwillingneſs to others, though both, in all human appearance, indifferent in themſelves; nay, ſometimes theſe ſecret intimations have moved us contrary to the moſt obvious reaſon about ſuch things; but in a little time, perhaps the genius of theſe *intimate* directions has manifeſted itſelf in ſome remarkable

event

event of our lives, unforeſeen, and improbable at that time.

Is it reaſonable then to ſuppoſe that ſuch hints ſhould be afforded us in things merely relative to our lives or fortunes in this world, and that we ſhould be left without ſome unerring guide or impulſe with regard to virtue, upon which our nobler fortunes and immortal lives depend? Theſe inward workings of the ſpirit, this natural conſciouſneſs, this ſelf-evidence, which I have, at ſeveral times, ſuppoſed in the mind of man, I am well convinced, has, in general, a ſtronger effect toward the influence of virtue, than all the art of logic, ſupported by the doctrine of eternal miſery. For my part, I have been often guilty of vice, with all the fear and trembling of an orthodox chriſtian; and have, at other times, been capable of virtue, without the leaſt contemplation about hope.

As true religion conſiſts in the perfect love of God*, I do not ſee how fear is, any way, neceſſary to piety; except that beſt and ſtrongeſt of all fears, which proceeds from extreme love. "There "is *mercy* with thee; therefore ſhalt thou be fear-"ed." And I cannot help joining with Shaftſbury, who ſays, "that prieſts have made religion "ſo very ſelfiſh, that I do not ſee, after all, what "merit there is in it worth rewarding." Fear may deter from vice, but can never conduce to virtue.

The leſs we ſuppoſe the deity capable of cruelty or revenge, the higher our love muſt naturally riſe; and it is certain that mankind is apt to undertake nobler and more difficult actions from the ſpirit of love, than from the paſſion of fear. There

* St. Mark ſays of the love of God, "This is the "firſt commandment."

is

is a courage in our natures, which ſpurns at fear; but a generoſity in our frames, which diſpoſes to love: and, if any man is baſe enough to be influenced by terror, it is becauſe he has not had his mind ſufficiently imbued with more worthy principles; and, in this caſe, which is corrupt morals, it is too often found that even fear will have no avail. Inſtances are numberleſs of moral Pagans, independent of hope: for, though in the writings of the antients there are very fine reaſonings upon a future life, and retributions of juſtice; yet theſe appear to be rather the *effect* of their philoſophy, than the *cauſe* of their virtue.

The Jeſuits have a blaſphemous tenet with regard to communicants: "That *attrition* alone, "which proceeds merely from the fear of hell-"torments, without *contrition*, which comprehends "the love of God, is ſufficient to juſtify a ſinner "at the ſacrament."

I will here give you ſome of the truly religious ſentiments of Father Queſnel, which I think regard this ſubject; and, in order to raiſe your eſteem for them, I need only tell you, they are ſome of the propoſitions condemned by the infamous bull *Unigenitus*.

"As ſin proceeds from a miſtaken love of our-"ſelves, ſo virtue proceeds from a true love of "God."

"Fear ſtops only the hand; but the heart re-"maineth adherent to ſin, as long as it is not di-"rected by the love of juſtice."

"He, who refrains from evil only out of fear "of puniſhment, commits it in his heart, and is "already guilty of it before God."

"He, who is baptized, is yet under the law, "even as a Jew, if he doth not fulfil it, or if he "fulfil it only through fear."

"Moſes,

" Moſes, and the prophets, the prieſts, and the " doctors of the law are dead, without ſending " any children to God, ſince they have made " ſlaves, but through fear."

" They that are under the curſe of the law, do " no good; becauſe it is equal ſin to do evil, or " to ſhun it through fear."

" He that approacheth God, ſhould not come " to him with brutal paſſions; nor be led by in- " ſtinct or fear, as beaſts, but by faith and love, " as children."

" Slaviſh fear repreſents God as a ſevere impe- " rious, unjuſt, and unmerciful maſter."

To all which I ſhall add, that fear may make good citizens, but love alone makes good chriſtians. And, upon the whole, I really think that in my doctrine there is myſtery enough to exerciſe faith, and inducements ſufficient to influence action.

Adieu, my Fanny!

HENRY.

Several thoughts occurred to me upon this ſubject, but I think I have hinted them in former letters.

LETTER CCLXXXIII.

I HAVE, ever ſince the cloſe of my late nice and extraordinary ſubject, been examining and viewing it in ſeveral lights, to find out whether my reaſoning had proceeded from the prejudice of former opinions, or had ariſen from an hope produced by a ſinner's fear. But I found, that, during a conſtant neglect of religious and chriſtian duties, and a free indulgence of a debauched and libertine life, I preſerved an unheſitating belief in the orthodoxy of hell-torments; and that, 'till within

theſe

theſe few years, that is, ſince I became in practice, as well as belief, a chriſtian, I never had the leaſt doubt upon the ſubject. The truth is, that I had never before given myſelf leiſure to reaſon about religion, and had entirely reſted upon a childiſh belief, inſtead of ſupporting myſelf by a rational faith. Perhaps a diſpute upon this ſubject may be put an end to by a very ſtrong, though not obvious, diſtinction between *puniſhment* and *miſery*; and I will agree with the orthodoxy, that ſinners may be eternally puniſhed, though not eternally miſerable. A leſs degree of bliſs, than we are taught from reaſon and revelation, our ſouls are capable of, is a puniſhment, but not a miſery; and, after having paſſed through a ſtate of purgation and contrition, emblematized by the *purging ſo as by fire*, as is ſufficient to fulfil the meaſure of divine laws, ſome inferior degree of immortal bliſs, may be the higheſt portion of a ſinner's redemption; and the conſciouſneſs that ſuch limitation proceeded from his own vices, or demerits, may be that puniſhment, which is deſcribed in Scripture by the metaphor of *the worm that never dieth*.

As I have, through the courſe of this argument, made uſe merely of human reaſon, inſtead of ſcriptural authority, I ſhall here call in aid ſome profane writing to ſupport me. Socrates ſpeaks by Plato in his Gorgias, much to this ſame purpoſe; and again in his Phædo, where he is diſcourſing juſt before his death. I have not the book here, or I would ſend you the quotations.

Now I can hardly ſuffer this to paſs for profane authority; for he was not only the greateſt heathen that ever lived, but was ſtiled, by ſome of the Fathers of the church, a chriſtian before chriſtianity; and * Eraſmus ſeems to conſider him as an inſpired

* Sante Socrates, ora pro nobis!

perſon.

perſon. Perhaps, the fulneſs of time being then near at hand, and the world, as it were, entient with the God of life and immortality, ſome ray of divinity might have illumined that great man, as the ſun diſperſes a twilight, before itſelf appears.

It was at this remarkable æra, when moral philoſophy was brought to the higheſt pitch that ever it arrived at in the heathen world, that Socrates, or Plato for him, acknowledged the inſufficiency of natural reaſon to perfect this great ſcheme, and called aloud for a revelation, to diſpel the miſts of error, and afford us a certain, infallible, and ſafe guide to direct mankind in the paths of virtue.

If I have erred in my reaſonings upon this ſubject, it has been owing more to the weakneſs of my underſtanding, than the wickedneſs of my heart. So I ſhall conclude here with the two laſt lines of Buckingham's epitaph, the whole of which I once tranſlated for you:

Humanum eſt errare, et neſcire:
Ens entium, miſerere mei!

HENRY.

LETTER CCLXXXIV.

My dear HARRY,

HOW tremendouſly near have I been to the extreme verge of an awful eternity, ſince I wrote laſt to you! The world and all its vanities receded inſtant before the glorious proſpect of a happy immortality: my ſoul ſtood hovering on the wing, like the laſt blaze of a poor dying taper, while nothing but my love for you ſeemed to retard its flight. Indeed, my heart's ſincere, and only tranſport, hadſt thou been here, I am ſure I ſhould have

have died! I every moment expected your coming, and the fond hope of expiring in your arms, made me hold in life by force, and ſuffer the ſevereſt torments, with a reſolution which has ſurprized myſelf. However, it has pleaſed heaven, by a kind of miracle, to reſtore me back to life, to love and thee, and what he wills is beſt.

Tell me my heart's beſt health, when will you come to ſooth my anxious mind, and raiſe my drooping ſpirits? for I want your aid extremely, not only to relieve me from ſolitude, but from company too; for I am incumbered at preſent, with two or three officious well-meaning people, who think one is to hang or drown themſelves, the moment they are left alone, and ſo relieve the guard by turns: you gueſs who they are, and know alſo that it requires the utmoſt vigour of health, and chearfulneſs of mind, to ſupport their company; for they are of that race of mortals, who, for want of ſomething to ſay, are eternally talking. This is miſerable phyſick for my diſordered *mind* and *body*, the ſenſible calm philoſophy of thy loved converſe, is my panacea for *both*.

Pythagoras ſays, the eyes cannot be cured without the head, the head without the body, nor the body without the ſoul: and Plato ſays, that moral diſcourſes procure health to the body, by giving peace to the ſoul, upon which the body depends. Say what day ſhall I be in perfect health.

Adieu!

FRANCES.

A ſecond letter is miſſing here.

LETTER CCLXXXV.

My deareſt REDIVIVA,

I RECEIVED your letter of laſt poſt, wrote by your own dear hand, which gave me extreme tranſport. What your ſecretary ſaid of your health, or rather of your life, which I was for a thouſand years alarmed about, could not make my mind eaſy, 'till I had the confirmation from yourſelf. How I paſſed the age between the two poſts, would be too tedious a detail to trouble you with now.

I was ill for ſeveral days, of the worſt ſort of illneſs, an inattention to reading, and a lowneſs of ſpirits. It was upon theſe hints that I wrote to you for the precedent of a will, though I pretended it was for another perſon, for fear of alarming you; and you cannot imagine what a ſhock it gave me, that I had deferred a matter of ſuch conſequence to you, and to our dear pledge, ſo long. I wrote that letter from my bed, and lay down between every paragraph.

What a ſympathy was between us at the ſame time! for I think we fell ill and recovered, at the ſame inſtant. How lucky it was too, that neither of us knew the other was ill, 'till we had both recovered!

I am no farther diſpleaſed at your having made uſe of *our* money, than that you ſhould mention it. In a fortnight, from this date, I deſign to be in town; neither my health or buſineſs will permit me ſooner.

Put up the incloſed along with my papers. Farewel, my redeemed, my deareſt life!

HENRY.

The paper, which he inc'oſed, was his will, in the wrapper of which was the following writing:

AS my marriage, which I hereby publiſh, which I have privately owned to ſome friends already, and which I hope, long before theſe ſeals ſhall be broke open, I ſhall find myſelf at liberty to acknowledge to all the world, may ſurprize ſome of my relations and friends, to whom I would, living or dying, give ſatisfaction in any particular relating to myſelf, I leave this declaration behind me for their peruſal.

I was not over-reached into this match by art, nor hurried into it by paſſion; but, from long experience of her ſenſe and worth, I reaſoned myſelf into it: and that I have not had any cauſe to change my opinion ſince, may be ſeen by my leaving this writing uncancelled at my death.

I conſidered, that there were three things neceſſary in a wife, which the world or myſelf ſhould approve; Money, to accommodate my fortunes; —Birth, to ſatisfy the pride of my relations;— and Senſe, to render my own life happy.

I conſidered, that it was an extraordinary chance for one man to compaſs all three; any one of which being as much good luck as generally falls to one man's ſhare, and the laſt the moſt ſeldom: there was, then, no diſpute which of them I ſhould prefer, conſidering that I was, at that time, thirty-ſix years of age, and that "a man, who is born "of a woman, has but a ſhort time to live," and a much ſhorter to be happy.

I conſidered, that I had formed my own mind, and made my own fortune too, having never had tutor or patron to either; and that my friends ought ſurely to give me leave to frame my own happineſs too.

I found I had ſo engaged her affections, that no other man could make her happy; and ſo dallied with her character, that only myſelf could repair it. Thus honour, juſtice, and generoſity concurred, to what my love and reaſon had before approved.

The progreſs of our loves may be ſeen in a collection of our letters, which are, at preſent, in the hands of a friend; and, in reading them, one may ſee how our ſtudies, ſentiments, and whole turn of mind, were adapted for each * other: ſo that, in our caſe, it might moſt emphatically be ſaid, "Whom the Lord hath joined, let no man put "aſunder." Amen.

I am in my conſtitutional principles, for a limited monarchy; and, in my national policy, for the Hanover ſucceſſion; and think that any one, who differs from me, muſt do ſo more from private reaſons, than any regard to the public good.

January 19, 1753.

There was alſo incloſed, in the will, the following poem of Pope's:

The UNIVERSAL PRAYER.

DEO OPT. MAX.

FATHER of all! in ev'ry age,
In ev'ry clime ador'd,
By ſaint, by ſavage, and by ſage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!

* Unum opus & requiem pariter diſponimus ambo.
PERSIUS.

Thou great firſt cauſe, leaſt underſtood!
Who all my ſenſe confin'd
To know but this, that thou art good,
And that myſelf am blind:

Yet gave me, in this dark eſtate,
To ſee the good from ill;
And binding nature faſt in fate,
Left free the human will.

What conſcience dictates to be done,
Or warns me not to do,
This, teach me more than hell to ſhun,
That, more than heav'n purſue.

What bleſſings thy free bounty gives,
Let me not caſt away:
For God is paid, when man receives;
T' enjoy is to obey.

Yet not to earth's contracted ſpan
Thy goodneſs let me bound,
Or think thee Lord alone of man,
When thouſand worlds are round.

Let not this weak and erring hand
Preſume thy bolts to throw,
And deal damnation round the land,
On each I judge thy foe.

If I am right, thy grace impart
Still in the right to ſtay;
If I am wrong, oh! teach my heart
To find that better way.

Save me alike from fooliſh pride,
Or impious diſcontent,
At aught thy wiſdom has deny'd,
Or aught thy goodneſs lent.

Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I ſee;
That mercy I to others ſhew,
That mercy ſhew to me.

Mean though I am, not wholly ſo,
Since quicken'd by thy breath;
Oh! lead me, whereſoe'er I go,
Through this day's life or death!

This day be bread and peace my lot;
All elſe beneath the ſun,
Thou know'ſt if beſt beſtow'd, or not,
And let thy will be done.

To Thee, whoſe temple is all ſpace,
Whoſe altar, earth, ſea, ſkies!
One chorus let all Being raiſe!
All nature's incenſe riſe!

LETTER CCLXXXVI.

TELL me, my deareſt Harry, can my whole life, and I would have it a long one for that purpoſe, ſpent in a continued ſeries of love and gratitude to thee, make a ſufficient return for the generous kindneſs you expreſs towards me? Oh my ſoul's joy! my heart o'erflows with tenderneſs, and ſoft ideas croud too faſt upon me, to admit of poor expreſſion; excuſe it then, and read my rapture in thy own dear breaſt.

With heart-felt praiſe, and with a zeal more fervent, than cloyſtered nun, or anchorite e'er knew, I bleſs that gracious power who has reſtored thy life, thy health to me, and to mankind; and oh! how truly good has the Almighty been to me, perhaps

haps ſcarce thankful enough for my own recovery, he wakes my gratitude upon a theme, which fills my ſoul with true devotion, and makes it all his own. Thus has heaven multiplied its mercies on me, by giving me, I hope, a juſt and proper ſenſe of them.

Need I tell you, that I am tranſported at the thoughts of ſeeing you, as you promiſe. I have cried out more than once, ſince I received your dear letter.

"Gallop apace ye fiery footed ſteeds, &c." I have the pleaſure to inform you that I am much better, than when I wrote laſt, tho' ſtill very weak; but I am certain that Hygea will return with thee, and as I ſhall be happier then, I ſhall, I am ſure, in every ſenſe, be better.

I own I am not diſpleaſed, that ſince we both happened to be ill, we were ſo at the ſame time, ſince we were not together, and as the ſame ſympathy accompanied our recovery, may a truly tender and affectionate one ever ſubſiſt between us.

Adieu and haſte!

HIATUS.

LETTER CCLXXXVII.

I AM returned home ſafe to my elyſium, and did not ſee ſo ſweet a place ſince I left it. A cow dead, two ſheep, ſix turkeys, two ducks, and a gooſe ſtolen, was all my loſs, while I was away. I forgot; a ferret died. Theſe things have greatly ruffled the calmneſs of my uncle's temper, eſpecially the firſt; for it was one of my weaver's cows, which I had ſold to him, about a month before; and thought it between half honeſt and half humane to make good his loſs. My uncle diſputed

very logically with me, upon this head; that it was not an act which honeſty required, becauſe I had fulfilled my part already, in delivering the cow; and was not to be a guarantee againſt accidents. He ſaid, that humanity was no more concerned with him, than any other object of charity, &c. &c. All which I acknowledge to be true; and yet I had ſome ſtrong idea roving in my mind, that I was but acting juſtly; not from any particular law of morality or religion, but from ſomething higher, that adapts itſelf to many nice circumſtances, which expreſs laws cannot reach. This is, I ſuppoſe, what the philoſophers and divines ſtile conſcience; ſomething, as Prior expreſſes it,

" Beyond the fix'd and ſettled rules
" Of vice and virtue in the ſchools," &c.*

There is, certainly, ſuch a thing as original truth, coeval with eternity; part of the eſſence of God, and not a law of his ordaining. This is that charming idea, which the mind of man contemplates in itſelf with ſo much philoſophic rapture. This primitive reaſon is the great criterion, which guides noble or uninſlaved minds, when they ſee fit to depart from, exceed, or act directly oppoſite to the expreſs laws of God, or man; which being but imperfect deductions from that original ſource, neceſſarily eſtabliſhed for the regulation of men's lives, who have not ſenſe or leiſure to contemplate the native beauty of truth, or virtue enough to embrace it, may be deviated, according as reaſon or conſcience inſtructs the unprejudiced mind, the great law would have been directed in ſuch a particular caſe or inſtance. I am extremely provoked

* See the ſtory of Quintus Scævola in Tully's Offices, book III. chap. xv.

at

at the unphiloſophic aſſertion of Deſcartes, "that "two and two make four, not from original ne- "ceſſity, but becauſe God Almighty willed it ſo."

I have juſt ſent to the ſtage; and, if a place be vacant, I ſhall go up to town in it.

Adieu!

HENRY.

HIATUS.

LETTER CCLXXXVIII.

My dear FANNY,

AS to the converſation with ——, I ſhould be much obliged, if you would let me know who was the ſecond perſon; which, upon my honour, I ſhall never mention either to him or the other; and this you may be aſſured of, both upon your account and mine. It may be of uſe to me to know his confident upon this occaſion, but only ſo, if I keep my mind to myſelf.

Such expreſſions, as he made uſe of, though the ſame that you quoted, may very well bear a different ſenſe from what miſtake, prejudice againſt him, or in favour of me, might poſſibly apprehend them in; or, even ſuppoſing them capable of no other meaning, but the unkind one reported to you, yet the ill-nature of the tongue does not always proceed from the malice of the heart; and the unmeaning purpoſes of a light reverie, or the vague folly of an idle dream, may ſometimes be miſtaken for a deliberate and determined ſcheme of action. I have not, thank Providence, in my own heart, malice to any man: I have therefore no jealouſy of any one's evil deſigns towards me. The few I love, I love entirely, both with friendſhip and eſteem: Thoſe, whom I merely love not, (for

I hate no one) have my general benevolence and charity. This happy caſt of mind has enabled me to live hitherto very eaſily and comfortably, both in the world, and my own cloſet; and has turned the edge of many mortifications and diſappointments, I have met with, in my communication with mankind; which, though frequent, I may be ſuppoſed to be not well qualified to bear with; as, from the general favourable opinion I have of human nature, in honour to its Creator, the conviction of yeſterday prepares me not for the diſappointment of to-morrow. My affections vary, but my friendſhips never; for the firſt depend upon others, but the latter upon myſelf; or, rather, this reſts upon an higher principle than the ſlight baſis of human connections. This principle is not my own; it was graciouſly lent me by Providence, who would have unkindly given me life without it. I will ſpend it here with pious uſe, and pay it back with grateful tribute! And the Lord incline our hearts to keep this law!

A letter is miſſing here.

LETTER CCLXXXIX.

My FANNY,

I DO not remember what I ſaid in the letter, which incloſed you Fielding's Eſſay; but am certain, from the tenor of my opinion of you, that I did not mean to reprimand you for the miſapplication of your time, in reading books of amuſement only. When I ſpeak of ſenſe, honour, or virtue, you ought to underſtand it as a compliment, a juſt one, to you; not meant to upbraid you for the want of theſe excellencies. Why am I eternally miſtaken?

You

You ſay, that the preſent uneaſineſs of your mind calls for amuſement. I ſhould think, that amuſements were fitter for a mind at eaſe. Irkſome thoughts are not to be relieved by trifles; and it requires high ſtudies, and deep reflections, to divert us from preſent ills, or melancholy proſpects. But let amuſement be the word! Will not Shakeſpear's plays amuſe you better than Durfey's, and would you not find better entertainment in the Spectator than the Rambler? No boarding-ſchool girl reads more for amuſement than I do. I would have you do ſo too: for I know very well, that ſenſe, philoſophy, and virtue will make any reading an higher entertainment to you; and that you are capable of receiving pleaſure or amuſement from many writings, which are capable of inſtructing half the world. This was what I meant to hint to you, by any of my letters on this ſubject; that the *utile* was not inconſiſtent with the *dulci*; as I was too anxious for even your amuſements, to leave them to chance or careleſſneſs for the hap. I recommended ſome papers to you lately, which, I flattered myſelf, would have highly amuſed you; as I am ſure the comments, I expected from you, upon them, would have greatly entertained me. But I will not preſume to ſet you taſks—Your own good ſenſe be your guide!

I am ſincerely concerned to find you ſtill in that plaintive mood of "misfortunes, anxiety of mind," &c. I hope, and believe, that you are not in any circumſtance of life, which can provoke ſuch melancholy reflections. In ſhort I have obſerved, that there is a great deal of ſenſe and virtue, with ſome ſmattering of philoſophy, in the world; but that great, noble, and comprehenſive quality, called fortitude, ſeems to have quite forſaken mankind; and Scarron might well ſay, if, in truth, he could even ſay ſo much,

"" None, but myſelf, could e'er that pitch attain,
" To ſport with miſery, and jeſt in pain."

May Heaven, moſt earneſtly ſolicited by my prayers, defend my deareſt, amiable love from both! and from every evil, natural and moral, except the penalties, which ſhe deſerves herſelf! and then ſurely her happineſs here will be an earneſt of that bliſs, which perfect ſpirits enjoy hereafter. Amen to that ſweet prayer!

Sir Francis Bacon has a fine paſſage, which may be quoted here, as a noble definition of that conſtancy, and fortitude of mind, which I am lamenting; "" prepared for every event, armed in all "" fortunes, foreſeeing without fear, enjoying with- "" out ſatiety, and ſuffering without impatience." This great character is in the power of ſo ſmall a portion of ſenſe and virtue to attain to, that, for my part, I am reſolved to commence hero from the date of this letter. Adieu!

HENRY.

LETTER CCXC.

I HAD the provoking pleaſure of receiving two letters from my dear Harry, by yeſterday's poſt. Tho' they were of different dates, the poſt-mark was the ſame on both; ſo that theſe teizing delays muſt be owing to the perſon, you ſend with your letters.

We do indeed too often miſapprehend each other. I make no doubt but the fault lies chiefly on my ſide; for I am conſcious I have too much quickneſs in my diſpoſition; which, joined to the earneſt deſire I have to render myſelf agreeable to you, puts me on endeavouring to juſtify or explain away my faults, perhaps, with too much warmth. It is long

ſince

ſince I have agreed with my dear preceptor, in owning that trifles will not, even for the preſent moment, amuſe a rational mind. There is a kind of ſelf-contempt inſeparable from the miſ-ſpending our time, in purſuit of any thing, which does not tend to make us wiſer or better, and of courſe happier. But this feeling is, I believe, only known to intelligent minds; tho' I have heard people complain of throwing away their time on a book, that did not pleaſe them, who were utterly incapable of making any reflection, or forming any ſentiment from Milton, Shakeſpear, or Addiſon.

It is, indeed, as my ſweet love obſerves, not in the power of trifles to relieve or calm the ſorrows of the mind, or divert the thoughts from bodily pain. It is only in the province of religion, philoſophy, and ſenſe to aid us in ſurmounting preſent ills, by teaching us to look forward to an happy futurity.

As I had entered into a regular courſe of reading the Spectators, I have not yet gone thro' the particular ſet of papers, you recommended. I think it is impoſſible you ſhould doubt my being really charmed with thoſe I have met: But, alas! what comment could you expect from me on ſubjects, where the little underſtanding I am miſtreſs of may be compared to an infant juſt weaned from leading-ſtrings, afraid to make a ſtep without a guide?

I never did ſet up for the leaſt degree of fortitude: My ſenſations are much too lively for a Stoic: A decent reſignation to the will of the Supreme Being is the utmoſt I aſpire to. Nor do I look upon it, that my complaining to you can be deemed a breach of duty, in this point: You are ſo much myſelf, and every faculty of my ſoul is ſo much devoted to you, that I can ſcarce call them mine. You have my thoughts all wild and uncor-

rected: Tho' you may not approve them, you ſhould pardon while you endeavour to reform them, as you do thoſe faulty ones that riſe involuntary in your own heart. "For where is the "palace whereinto foul things intrude not?"

My heart's dear Harry muſt give me leave to aſſure him, I am ſincerely grateful for that elegant and affecting ſolicitude he expreſſes for my happineſs; of which he is, and I hope ever will be, the firſt and only agent in the hand of Heaven. May it reward and bleſs him for the kindneſs, and return thoſe wiſhes which he makes for me to him an hundred fold!

You do me but ſtrict juſtice, when you believe that nothing, but *extreme illneſs*, or ſome very extraordniary accident, could prevent my writing. Your not hearing from me, by Saturday's poſt, was owing to the *firſt*. I was the whole day in racking pain, and could not reſt three minutes in any place; therefore, as I had no letter from you to anſwer, I thought it cruel to make you uneaſy with my pains.

Tho' I am tranſported at the thoughts of ſeeing my deareſt Harry, I would, by no means, deſire you to come, unleſs you can do it with convenience to yourſelf; for I would have you leave all your cares behind, when your dear preſence is to baniſh mine. But in this, and every thing, I ſubmit myſelf to your diſcretion and your love.

Adieu, my deareſt life! May it be as conſiſtent with your buſineſs, as I am ſure it is with your inclinations, ſoon to ſee your fond and faithful

FANNY.

LETTER CCXCI.

My deareſt FANNY,

YOU know I was lately angry: And I am ſo aſhamed of it, that I have been recollecting what my reading, or own reflections can ſuggeſt, firſt, to palliate the offence for what is paſt; and to prevent, for the future, the ill effects of a vice and weakneſs, which I think even I have ſenſe and virtue enough to guard myſelf from.

The beſt hints, which I ſhall offer here, are taken from an eſſay upon this very ſubject of anger, wrote by lord Verulam.

To extinguiſh this paſſion entirely, is but a bravery of the Stoics: For, like all ill habits, we muſt cure ourſelves by degrees; as a ſkilful rider manages an headſtrong horſe, guides his ſteps in the ſafeſt courſe, and pulls and relaxes the rein by turns. The reaſon that ſo few people reclaim themſelves from bad affections, is owing more to want of judgment than virtue. We grow careleſs upon finding the imperfections of human nature not eaſily conquered by the perfection of philoſophy; not being aware that habit muſt be overcome by habit; as regimen cures chronical diſtempers better than medicines. Intermiſſions are as neceſſary in ethics, as in phyſic. The Scriptures, which are better guides in morals, than the whole body of philoſophers, give ſome indulgence to human frailty in this particular: "Be ye angry, but ſin not." And in another place, "Let not the ſun go down "upon your wrath;" which ſeem to declare, that the continuance of anger, not the firſt ſtart of it, makes the vice. Bacon ſays, the beſt way to cure the natural inclination or habit of reſentment, is to reflect upon the effects of anger, "how it troubles "a man's life;" and the beſt time to do this is to look

look back upon anger, when the fit is over. Seneca ſays well, that "Anger is like a ruin, which breaks "itſelf upon that it falls." Socrates being aſked what a man was doing, who was ſeen in the ſtreet chaffing himſelf in a rage, anſwered juſtly, "he is "puniſhing an angry man." The Scripture exhorts us to poſſeſs our ſouls in patience; then whoever is out of patience, is out of poſſeſſion of his ſoul. A paſſionate man may be compared to a bee, according to Virgil's expreſſion, that † when they ſting, they loſe their ſpirit in the wound. Perhaps this may leave an open to ſarcaſm, to compare a calm man to a drone. Bacon ſays, it ought to make men aſhamed of anger, the conſideration of thoſe perſons, who are moſt ſubject to it; children, women, old people, and ſick folks. Men ſhould carry their reſentment rather with ſcorn, than paſſion; eſpecially where our pride is picqued; for that ſame pride ſhould rather ſhew us above, than below an injury or affront. Many other arguments, drawn from prudence, morality and religion, occur to me at preſent; but, I am ſure, there are none of them neceſſary to inform your ſenſe and underſtanding; and all I mean by this eſſay, is to furniſh you with a few hints to be offered to my own conſideration, whenever you find me relapſing into that weakneſs, which you may remember in a former letter, ſometime ago. I mentioned as the only thing, which, now and then, gets the better of the tenor of my philoſophy.

Adieu, my faireſt guide! I aſſure you, that I fly to your arms with all the impatience of an angry man, and with all that good-nature and affection, which paſſionate perſons are remarkable for.

ATHENODORUS.

† Animaſque in vulnere ponunt. VIRG.

LETTER CCXCII.

Dear FANNY,

I AM juſt returned from my expedition to Scotland; and, to give you my opinion of it, I need only ſay, that, ſince I was obliged to go, I am glad it is over.

You cannot imagine, in what light every thing, both at bed and board, appeared to me, who have been uſed all my life to travel through the beſt roads in England; for, though I am no great epicure, yet I look upon cleanlineſs not to be any extraordinary luxury; though Mandeville calls it ſo, when he wants to help out a diſingenuous argument.

I have rode ſeveral days through this quondam kingdom; and was ſo perſuaded, that I had ſtrayed into Gulliver's country of Hounhymns, that I was almoſt tempted to alight from my horſe, and ſwear allegiance to him; for I could not perceive a grain of corn, through all the fields, but oats; nor any one houſe that was too good for a ſtable. And when at laſt I chanced to eſpy a *garden* of wheat, I rejoiced, like the ſhipwreck'd philoſopher, who, thinking himſelf caſt away upon a deſart iſland, when he obſerved a circle deſcribed on the ſands, cried out, "Courage my friends, for human creatures inhabit "here."

There is a ſaying among foreigners, who obſerve the cleverneſs of the generality of the Scotch gentlemen, who travel abroad, that Scotland keeps all her fools at home: But I think they are miſtaken in this particular; for, really, thoſe of that nation, whom I have had any ſort of commerce with, are "ne feuls." I ſhall not preſs this remark farther, as I think all national reflections both unphiloſophic and unjuſt. I ſhall take leave of you now; for, as

my

my ingenious hoſteſs of the *garter* often expreſſes herſelf, I am tired after my fatigue.

Adieu! my own Fanny,

HENRY.

LETTER CCXCIII.

My dear HARRY,

I THINK your noble correſpondent makes a very poor figure in his laſt letter. I own, I had a better opinion of his ſenſe and ſpirit, than to ſuppoſe he could be alarmed at finding a perſon, who poſſeſſed theſe merits in a higher degree, than himſelf; but I am now convinced, that the ſuperiority you demonſtrated, is the reaſon of his declining any farther connection with you. It is not eaſy to fall, with a good grace, from a principal to a ſecond, in any point which we have much at heart; nor can we bear the perſon, whoſe ſuperior excellence makes us appear in an inferior light, even to ourſelves. Swift is the only author, or perſon, I ever met with, who honeſtly confeſſes this foible:

" Why muſt I be outdone by Gay,
" In my own hum'rous, biting way?
" Arbuthnot is no more my friend,
" Who dares to irony pretend;
" Which I was born to introduce,
" Refin'd at firſt, and ſhew'd its uſe."

When I plained my lonely ſituation, did I ſeem to lament the want of any friend, or companion, but thee? Indeed, I neither did, nor do; for all other company and converſe are taſteleſs to me. I wiſh I had religion or philoſophy ſufficient to ſupport your abſence with a proper firmneſs, I will not ſay, unconcern. But to thoſe who truly love, believe me,

me, *the beſt authors* appear but bad comforters, under the pains of ſeparation: To me they muſt be rather a diſſervice, than an help; as they would but more ſtrongly remind me of thee, thou charming, practic eſſence of them all! However, if I live, I will fall into whatever courſe of reading you think proper, as I ſhall always be pleaſed with adopting your ſentiments, or modelling mine by them, as far as my poor, little capacity will admit. But let me beg you not to attempt curing me of the pain, which your abſence will ever give me; for, as nothing but indifference can render me eaſy in that particular, be aſſured it is out of your power to make me ſo.

Notwithſtanding your ſituation, which I know requires your preſence, I very ſeriouſly and ſincerely wiſh you here, at this and every moment. There is no ſaying how far the weakneſs of my body affects my mind: Perhaps my being diſqualified for every other pleaſure and ſatisfaction, makes me to feel your loſs more ſtrongly. Be that as it will, I cannot help thinking it a little melancholy to be left in the forlorn, unſettled way, I am in my preſent condition. How is the time fixed for your coming, when my falling ill is ſo uncertain? And ſure you need not grudge me the happineſs of ſeeing you a little ſooner than, perhaps, my lateſt moment. However, if it is inconvenient, I relinquiſh your promiſe; for I ſhall always prefer your intereſt to my ſatisfaction; nor can I receive any joy from the thoughts of your coming with reluctance to me.

Adieu! my heart's dear Harry!

LETTER CCXCIV.

My dear FANNY,

YOUR obſervation upon ——— is extremely juſt, and expreſſed in a very pretty turn and manner; and tho' I did not flatter myſelf in the way you have taken it, yet that may rather be his reaſon, than none at all; for, as to the objection he makes, with regard to the expence, I think my letters ſufficiently proved that the expence of my ſcheme would be conſiderably leſs than his own plan.

Your remarks upon —— puts me in mind of a paſſage of Sir Francis Bacon's Treatiſe upon the Wiſdom of the Antients, where he labours to give a new moral to the old fables of antiquity. Juno is ſaid to be woo'd by Jupiter, in the form of a cuckow; upon which he makes the following comment: "That men often impede their own ſucceſs "by oſtentation of ſuperior merit; and that eſpe- "cially with perſons, who have more arrogance "and pride, intimated by the character of Juno, "than ſenſe or merit. The ſureſt way to win "their favour is, to appear as mean and humble, "both in virtue and outward appearance, as poſ- "ſible."

The whole treatiſe, which I am now quoting from, is, in my opinion, a very poor performance, and much below ſo great a man. The morals drawn from the tales of the Pantheon are wretchedly forced, and many of them improperly adapted. His ſtile is ordinary, and expreſſions low.

My deareſt life, you cannot ſurely think, that I would not rather be with you, even in town, than from you, even here: Why then do you ſeem to upbraid me? Oh never, never do ſo again. Be aſſured this once for all, and then never let a doubt

or

or ſurmiſe diſturb your breaſt, that I never ſtay a day from you, but when it is neceſſary I ſhould, both for your preſent ſecurity and future happineſs. You can ſurely calculate pretty near the time, you would, moſt particularly deſire my attendance; and it will certainly be time enough for me to go up then. If I ſhould go at preſent, perhaps I might be, for many reaſons, under a neceſſity of leaving you, at that time, I ſhould moſt wiſh to be with you. Thus your own impatience would diſappoint your end. I ſhewed the ſame impatience in deſiring you to come down; but I have been uneaſy, ever ſince, about it, as I am apprehenſive the attempt would be extremely hazardous, and the journey too fatiguing; and an unlucky *contretemps* might happen in the country, before you could be able to return again. I hope this letter will reach you time enough to prevent you; or, rather, I hope your prudence has corrected my indiſcretion already. There are many reaſons, too, againſt your coming at preſent; which, however material in themſelves, are inſignificant to mention, after the objection I have made, of your danger.

I am, indeed I am, tout a vous ſeul.

LETTER CCXCV.

My deareſt FANNY,

TUESDAY's poſt did not bring me any letter from you. In your preſent ſituation, you may judge how uneaſy I muſt be, upon ſuch an occaſion. Accordingly I ſat down to ſcold, or complain, which are ſynonymous terms.——But ſtay, ſays I: Before my letter need go, another poſt may come in; and many accidents may have prevented her writing, or made the letter miſcarry, without her illneſs or neglect. Thus, my pet, do I always deal with

with you, and would ſooner ſuſpect improbabilities, or even my own ſenſes, than your truth; and ſhould, in like circumſtances, behave, with regard to you, like that noble Venetian, who, ſeeing a looking glaſs make ſome reflections on his wife, broke it with his cane, crying out, "Thou lyeſt."

Farewel, my deareſt life! I am not leſs yours than ever; and need no more to aſſure you, I am, totally, and for ever, yours.

HENRY.

LETTER CCXCVI.

MY deareſt Fanny tells me, that it is only in my power to make her unhappy. 'Tis a ſecret you may ſafely truſt me with, and to make you the more ſecure, I do hereby place the ſame confidence in you. I am ſure that we ſhall never render one another uneaſy by deſign, and inadvertence can have no excuſe, when our mutual attention ſhould be conſtantly directed toward each others happineſs. If ever this charming union ſhould be broken in upon, on your part, my love might induce me to forgive you, but ſhould it happen, on my ſide, my juſtice would hinder me from ever forgiving myſelf.

I ſhould not ſpeak thus to you, if my heart had not acquired a perfect confidence and acquieſcence, in your ſenſe and behaviour; and 'tis while it o'erflows with love and fondneſs toward you, that I tremble moſt at the bare poſſibility of that charming current, being diverted or dried up. 'Tis not in pain or ſickneſs, but in the vigour of health and pleaſure, that the apprehenſions of death uſe to ſhock us moſt.

Our fine weather is broke, and yet there is ſomething not diſpleaſing to me, in this viciſſitude. I may

may ſay with Milton, in the ſame words, tho' not in the ſame ſenſe,

" To me each ſeaſon, and its change
" All pleaſe alike."

for, tho' I have a great deal of conſtancy, with regard to love and friendſhip, I delight extremely in every variety which nature has indulgently contrived, either for pleaſure or for uſe.

Adieu!

LETTER CCXCVII.

I AM, my deareſt Fanny, in as uneaſy and diſagreeable circumſtances, at preſent, as any man can be, who does not labour under guilt or pain; and if it was not for that happy and philoſophic turn of mind, which I have endeavoured to cultivate in myſelf theſe many years, I cannot anſwer to what extravagance I might be diſturbed, conſidering the natural violence of my paſſions, and that ſanguine melancholic diſpoſition, that was born with me. One might imagine that the lucky complexion I have contrived to give to my thoughts, paſſions and affections, was owing to a preſentiment, that at ſome time or other of my life, I ſhould need a ſufficient pilot or guide, to conduct me ſafe, thro' ſome unforeſeen ſtorm or labyrinth: But every man of common ſenſe and knowledge of life, has naturally ſuch a preſentiment: In ſo much, that it amazes me, to find ſo few apply their thoughts to the ſtudy of moral philoſophy; when any other art or ſcience, a man may live and die, without having an opportunity, or neceſſity of practiſing; but this, every day may afford him ſome occaſion of exerciſing; and he muſt be a very lucky perſon, or die very young, if he is not called upon, ſome time or other of his life,

life, for the full exertion of it. It is a ſcience which requires no maſter; for every man may teach it to himſelf that will be at the pains; *without interruption, or interfering with any buſineſs, ſtudy or pleaſure.* What would a man give for an art, which could procure him that ſtate, or circumſtance of life, upon which his wiſhed for happineſs is planned? What art then can come ſo near to it as this, which renders our happineſs of life independent of any ſtate, or circumſtance of it? *O Philoſophia Dux Vitæ!*

Write to me often, in aid of my philoſophy. I am ſo overcome with ſtupidity, by the diſagreeable buſineſs of theſe three days, that I cannot ſay any thing to you at preſent, in the ſtile or manner, which an addreſs of any kind to you, would otherwiſe inſpire me with. However, this alteration in my mind has not made any in my heart, which is as really yours, in metaphor, as it is my own in anatomy.

HENRY.

LETTER CCXCVIII.

My dear FANNY,

THO' I have wrote you a letter by this poſt, already, it does not ſatisfy my love, tho' it fulfils my duty, and I have ſtopped here, at Carlow, merely to tell you, that I have got ſo far on my journey, eſcaped from rain, and am drinking, with as much love, honour, and affection, as ever man had for ſuch relations, my wife and child's health. God bleſs you both, and me too, only as I ſhall deſerve from each of you: For on theſe terms alone, am I capable of happineſs in this life, or intitled to it in the next.

Provi-

Providence has ſhower'd down bleſſings unmerited on us both, which we ought to look upon as a particular obligation, ſuperadded to the general one which all mankind originally lye under, to be not only virtuous, but religious alſo. Let us henceforth endeavour to deſerve thoſe favours, which Heaven has already beſtowed upon us *gratis*, that by attempting, at leaſt, to diſcharge that debt, we may eſtabliſh a fund of credit for the future.

There is not a creature breathing, of whoſe virtue, religion, or moral diſpoſition, I have a better opinion than of yours: Your only weakneſs, is want of reſolution upon a few occaſions to put ſome of theſe rare qualities in execution. But let this very juſt reflection begin to rouſe you to active virtue, that this weakneſs of human nature is the chief cauſe of all the follies and vices of mankind: Few perſons err thro' ignorance, and no man is wicked for want of moral diſpoſitions; 'tis habit only that renders us vicious; for by giving way to a faintneſs of reſolution, this negative vice runs us, by degrees, into poſitive guilt.

There are three things, which I have often recommended to you, in general terms, and that I muſt now make it a point with you to obſerve for the future. To riſe early, to read more for the improvement of your mind, than the entertainment of your fancy; and to attend regularly all the *poſitive* duties of religion. I want to introduce you to the world in the advantageous light your ſenſe and virtue is capable of, more my vanity, or higheſt pride, need not require.

Adieu, my fondeſt wiſh, and
moſt rational deſire,

HENRY.

LETTER CCXCIX.

December 17, 1752. N. S.

WHAT a diſmal vacuum has my life been ſince my deareſt Harry left me! how long do even theſe ſhort days appear, and oh how inſupportably tedious are the nights! I have neither ſlept, nor been awake, ſince I ſaw you: A lethargic heavineſs oppreſſes me all day, and a wakeful fearfulneſs ſeizes me at night. I find myſelf unhappy, by the joint recollection of your tenderneſs when preſent; and the fear of your indifference when abſent. You ſeem to meet me with pleaſure, but leave me without regret. 'Tis four days ſince we parted, and I have not heard from you, tho' I think the poſt might have anſwered ſooner. Let thoſe days, and every one, 'till I receive your letter, be number'd among thoſe which have been already loſt in this year's ſtile; they ſhall not be admitted into my calendar, nor reckoned in the diary of my life.

Adieu!

Your own Heautonti.

LETTER CCC.

I Wiſh, my dear Fanny, you would quit that plaintive elegiac ſtrain you accoſt me with every ſecond or third poſt. You are either ſick, angry, or jealous, I obſerve once a week. Now let me ſupply you with a ſhort ſketch of *natural philoſophy*, to obviate the doubts of your laſt letter.

I fly to your arms with all the eagerneſs of a lover, but quit them with the calmneſs of a friend; and you are alarmed, only becauſe you have miſtaken eagerneſs for love, and calmneſs for indifference. I rather love you better at parting, as one does all goods when they are deprived of them.

I ſhall

I ſhall ſubſcribe myſelf, as I have often done before, and ſhall perſevere to the end, your lover and your friend, with this happy addition of

Your huſband alſo.

HENRY.

HIATUS.

LETTER CCCI.

Dear FANNY, *Maidenhall.*

YOU have not, in any degree, expreſs'd the many charming and uſeful ways I want your preſence, ſociety, and aſſiſtance here: however, there are ſome things which ſupport and comfort me under this ſeparation; for, as Young ſays,——

I elaborate

An artificial happineſs from pains.

The fond endearments we paſs to and from, in abſence, ſtrengthen and eſtabliſh by uſe, our love and friendſhip for each other,

" So thinking on thy charming youth,
" I'll love thee o'er again in age."

we reflect on each other in a more tender and polite manner, in abſence; our faults are leſs obvious, by being placed at a greater diſtance; no diſguſt can affect us, nor any ſudden paſſion tranſport us; it muſt be malice præpenſe, to offend in a correſpondence: we are, when ſeparate, improving our minds, regulating our paſſions, and forming our manners, with a view to our mutual happineſs; which caprices, picques, and domeſtic cares might have too frequently interrupted our application to, had we lived ſooner together. We are, at preſent, as it were, ſerving an apprenticeſhip to matrimony, before we ſet up for ourſelves.

I have often made uſe of the fondeſt and moſt endearing expreſſions towards you, and have declared my tenderneſs and eſteem for you, with all the warmth

" Of youthful poets fancy, when they love."

and yet, I aſſure you, that I always thought I fell ſhort of that praiſe, which it was in the power of your merit to deſerve: you wanted, indeed, ſome few things to render you perfect, but I always thought, as I do now, that you had the fund within yourſelf; do but exert that natural good underſtanding, and innate virtue, which Providence has ſo profuſely bleſt you with, and you need not become pupil to the Greek or Roman names: never let word or action eſcape you, even of the moſt minute conſequence, without firſt conſulting your beſt ſenſe about it; and make uſe of your underſtanding and reflection, rather to *authoriſe* your words and actions, than to *juſtify* them; for we have all of us ſuch a partiality to whatever we have either ſaid or done, that tho' we ſhould reſolve to examine our conduct, with all the diſintereſtedneſs of a third perſon, we ſhall find it hardly poſſible to rid ourſelves of prepoſſeſſion.

The generality of mankind, owe the ruin of their happineſs, or fortunes to the indiſcretion of imagining many things, too inſignificant for conſideration; which, tho' not the *doors*, may be the *hinges*, upon which they turn, *

" Think nought a trifle, tho' it ſmall appear,
" Small ſands the mountain, moments make the
" year,
" And trifles life; your care to trifles give,
" Or you may die, before you learn to live."

* Optima cujuſque rei natura in portionibus ejus minimis obſervatur. Plin. Hiſt. Nat.

But

But you have a better authority for this, in Eccleſiaſticus, "He that deſpiſeth ſmall things, ſhall "periſh, by little and little."

Farewel,

HENRY.

LETTER CCCII.

Dear FANNY, Maidenhall.

AS I condoled with you upon the change in the weather laſt poſt, I think it fair to congratulate you now, upon its amendment; for 'tis greatly improved ſince I came home.

I found nothing done here ſince I went abroad, but a great many things *undone*, which I had left ſafe and well: I am exerting myſelf, to make amends, but am greatly diſtreſſed for want of money: there are many and large demands, upon me here, and you know how poor I left Dublin.

I hope you like the country, and the people where you are, and that you will take the wholeſome advantage of your preſent ſituation, by riſing early, and uſing exerciſe. Do, my deareſt Fanny, let me meet you healthy, ſprightly and clever, the firſt week in May, when my friend and I ſhall go to Dublin together, upon buſineſs of his. Read much, reflect more; read and reflect the things proper to improve your mind, and to regulate your life. Be all that I wiſh, in woman—For you can—

Adieu!

HENRY.

LETTER CCCIII.

Dear HARRY, Caſtle-Carbery.

I WOULD have wrote to you laſt poſt, but that I fear'd my letter might poſſibly reach home before you, and by that means occaſion ſome unlucky *contretemps*, from curious impertinents; but, as I hope you are, by this time, ſeated in your own *chamber*, and writing to your own Fanny, I venture to addreſs you, from *mine*.

After a pleaſant jaunt in the ſtage, for twenty miles, with tolerable company, the chair met, and brought us hither to dinner, where we paſs our time, after a manner that would pleaſe you extremely, but is not yet quite eaſy to me: however, I hope that a little uſe, joined to my deſire of conforming to your inclinations, will ſoon render early hours, no ſuppers, and exerciſe, agreeable to me. I have already made ſome progreſs in ſpinning, and when we meet, you will find me a more expeditious houſe-wife than Penelope; for I do believe that I could finiſh a web in ſomething leſs than *ten years*. However, tho' this may be a conteſted point, I am quite certain, of not being found inferior to her, in conſtancy to my dear huſband, and affection to our little ſon.

We have very cold weather here, which you perhaps, may not be ſenſible of, but in our lofty ſtation we are expoſed to the rudeſt aſſaults of Boreas, for we are raiſed to ſuch a degree of eminence, that thoſe in the valley conſider the rooks and us as inhabitants of another region; while, in return, we look upon them as our antipodes. It was in this latitude of atmoſphere that Juno ſcreen'd herſelf from the attempt of Ixion: if you

was

was here, I know you would ſay our ſituation was almoſt *metaphyſical.*

Your's from the clouds,

IRIS.

LETTER CCCIV.

I RECEIVED my dear Fanny's letter, and am glad to find that you arrived ſafe, and did not diſlike your company on the road. You ſpeak of exerciſe and early hours, as a tremendous experiment; but you'll find, in this, and indeed in moſt things, that the reſolving upon it, is greater difficulty than the putting it into execution. When you have practiſed for a week, you'll find it become not only eaſy, but pleaſant too: ſo that you will look back with regret, not only on the time, but the pleaſure alſo, which you have ſuffered to paſs by, unheeded, unenjoyed. Can that action be deemed difficult, which has health, pleaſure, ſenſe and virtue to recommend it?

What makes me more particularly in love with early hours, is that to them I owe whatever knowledge, reflection, morality, philoſophy, religion, health or fortune, I poſſeſs at preſent; and tho' I can boaſt but very ſmall portions of theſe advantages, yet the little I enjoy, may well appear extraordinary, in a man, who neither had or education, or patrimony. Aurora was my Minerva, my only Mentor. Early hours, not only afforded me leiſure to read and think, but inſpired me alſo to do both; for what time, or what ſpirit can a perſon have to exert himſelf, either in ſtudy or buſineſs, who riſes not till mid-day? a former letter of mine to you, dated at four o'clock, in a ſummer's morning, and ſome others, written ſome time ſince, upon this ſubject, are well worth fre-

quent reading and reflection; * for indeed, there is ſomething more in this matter, than is too generally imagined: for ſurely, if people knew, or conſidered how many ſeveral ways, early hours may be ſerviceable to them, the practice would not require one moment's heſitation.

Your's,

DILUCULUS.

LETTER CCCV.

I HAVE but juſt time to acknowledge the receipt of my dear Harry's ſenſible letter, to own the reaſoning of it juſt, and to declare my concurrence, both in thought and act, with his very clever ſentiments.

I ſpend all the mornings in ſtudying the houſehold œconomy of this family, and find the ſincereſt ſatisfaction in every little acquirement of domeſtic knowledge, when I reflect, that it may, one day, oh when! be ſerviceable to you: nor ſhall I think any thing mean or difficult, below my obſervation, or above my capacity, that is proper for my ſex or ſtation.

I paſs my time very agreeably, becauſe very rationally here, and find a vaſt difference between this family, and the generality of my town acquaintance. How charming is virtue, religion, and good ſenſe! without them, how inſipid or offenſive is converſation: how capricious is love, and how unſtable is friendſhip! indeed, my Harry, I will never more attach my affections to any perſon, who wants principles; I will be certain, at leaſt, that they have innocence to recommend them, before I engage myſelf in any intimacy.

* Letter XLVII. The three laſt paragraphs of letter CCIV. and letter CCVI.

My little honeſt heart has already ſuffered much, from its diſappointments; but, I confeſs that they were owing to my own imprudence, for as Rochefaucault ſays, "We chuſe our friends, rather for "the qualities of the underſtanding, than thoſe of "the heart." But this is a weakneſs that I ſhall no more be guilty of; tho' to condemn myſelf ſtill farther, I cannot boaſt that any of thoſe perſons, whom I have loved, except my poor dear, departed friend, * had any extraordinary underſtanding; and I really think that ſhe had a ſound heart too; for I attribute the latter part of her behaviour, to a certain miſtake with regard to me, and which I am extremely concerned that ſhe died, before I was at liberty to ſet her right about.

Perhaps, the indolence of my temper, which imprudently confined my acquaintance to one ſet, occaſioned my attachments to them, as that quota of affection, which was originally in my nature, muſt neceſſarily diffuſe itſelf into whatever channel was open to receive it. Which puts me in mind of your hugging a cat, when you were a child, as you told me in one of your letters, by way of exerciſing that fondneſs and benevolence of nature, which *certain croſs people* would not give you an opportunity of exerting, upon fitter objects.

Adieu,

FRANCES.

LETTER CCCVI.

Dear FANNY, Roſs.

I CAME hither from Wexford aſſizes to day, and this is my ſtage homeward. You ſee that, tho' I traverſe the kingdom, amidſt all the hurry

* See letter XCIV. 2d page, 1ſt paragraph.

and variety of life I am engaged in, I never forget you, even for a ſingle poſt

I was introduced to Sir A. G. by Mr. C——, who received me with great politeneſs and affability. There is ſomething remarkably mild and chearful in his manners; and his whole character is amiable for humanity, and love to his country. I have known men of brighter parts, and more diſtinguiſhed abilities, but never met with any one, my own Arthur * excepted, who in ſo ſhort an acquaintance, engaged my affections. They both ſeem to be perſons of that excellent and uncommon character, who have ſo confirmed a worthy nature, by habit, that it paſſes unnoticed by common obſervers, becauſe it is never ſeen to exert itſelf, by philoſophic ſtruggles; and uſe has rendered it alſo, ſo familiar to themſelves, that they become inſenſible to their own merit; for I remember our friend Arthur ſeem'd to look upon me as a flatterer, when I firſt told him, from characteriſtic obſervation, that he was an extraordinary perſon.

Rare qualities, like curious medals, may be eſteemed at an high price, by certain virtuoſi; but uſeful ones, like trading coin, bear the better ſtamp of currency. High merits, or extraordinary virtues, which gild only ſome particular actions, without illuſtrating the tenor of our lives, ſerve rather to obſcure our general character, and may be compared,

——" To ſnow upon the ravens back,
" Or a rich jewel in an Æthiop's ear."

Adieu my hope, and my poſſeſſion, my moſt flattering hope, and my moſt certain poſſeſſion.

HENRY.

* Arthur Newburgh, Eſq;

LETTER CCCVII.

I HOPE my dear wanderer has by this time, arrived ſafe at home, and has read a little hundred of my letters, that I have directed at him, tho' I knew I could not receive any anſwer; but there is a certain chaſte pleaſure in performing a duty to one's friend, while they remain ignorant of the obligation; and I am much pleaſed with the fond folly of a lover, who, on the point of being ſhipwreck'd, wrote a tender billet to his miſtreſs, tho' he expected the next wave would ſwallow up both himſelf and the letter.

I am much obliged to you for writing ſo conſtantly to me, more particularly at this time, when I want your kindneſs to counterbalance the ill nature and ingratitude of others. I am well pleaſed that you have been introduced to Sir A. G. He has a general good character, and from the handſome manner you ſpeak of him in, I am certain he deſerves it. What an uncommon gift you have, of looking into the very ſouls of men, and bringing virtues and excellencies to light, that lie hidden from the ordinary obſervation of the world, nay, even from themſelves; and by your praiſe, rewarding them, like heaven, for unconſcious worth? part of your character is moſt truly pointed out by this line,

"To beckon modeſt merit from the ſhade."

We may admire a perſon who has uncommon, great, or good qualities, which we are conſcious we are not endowed with; but we are more inclined to love or eſteem thoſe, who, without brighter parts, or higher excellencies than our own, attract the good opinion and affection of mankind; becauſe we look upon theſe latter as a mirror, which ſhews us what we are capable

of arriving to, in a juſt and pleaſing light, which makes us become, rather emulous, than envious of their fame. For my own part, I am certain, that if the Counteſs of C——y, and Lady O——, had been equal in their friendſhip and intimacy toward me, I ſhould have always loved Lady O—— beſt; from my being certain that I could never be as beautiful as the firſt, and a fond hope that I might, ſome time or other, become as good and amiable as the latter.

I agree with you, that uniform and habitual ſenſe and goodneſs are infinitely preferable to the moſt ſhining qualities or virtues, which do not influence the whole ſcope of our lives and conduct; but ſtill I am an advocate for the failings of thoſe, who have great and uncommon excellencies: perfection is not the lot of man, any more than happineſs; and upon ſuch extraordinary occaſions, I am apt to attribute the good to the excellence of the character, and the bad to the weakneſs of human nature. When I obſerve the vanity and inſincerity of Cicero, and read of the foibles and meanneſs of Bacon, I really feel myſelf affected with the moſt tender concern you can imagine. Melmoth ſays, ſpeaking of the firſt character, "Perhaps, there is ſomething in the natural me-"chaniſm of a human frame, neceſſary to con-"ſtitute a fine genius, that is not altogether fa-"vourable to the excellencies of the heart. It is "certain, at leaſt, and let it abate our envy of "uncommon parts, that great ſuperiority of in-"tellectual qualifications, has not often been "found in conjunction with the much nobler "advantages of a moral kind."

Farewel,

FRANCES.

LETTER CCCVIII.

MY deareſt comfort, not deareſt bought, but deareſt valued, your laſt letter pleaſed me, in a particular manner, as all yours do in general, that enter upon ſubjects.

Extraordinary qualities, like rare comets, ſtrike us with a certain admiration, from the uncommonneſs of their appearance; but ordinary, and conſequently more uſeful virtues, like the ſun and moon, engage our affections more particularly, from their conſtant and daily influence upon human life. The firſt are certainly, within the rules of order, tho' not yet within the preſcription of ſcience; but the latter have more immediate and viſible effects, which each day and ſeaſon have an uniform dependance upon.

Uncommon virtues may be like great wits, who "ſometimes glorioufly offend;" but then theſe faults are not *implied* in genius, but meer indulgences, poorly begg'd by it. Perſons of the moſt exalted merits and virtues, have been too often guilty of great vices, and irregularities; but ſurely, theſe are no farther a *mark* of the former, than as they are a *ſtain* upon them; and I think that a perſon makes but a ſneaking figure, who claims indulgencies, on account of thoſe excellencies, which ought to have precluded ſuch an apology. This is turning the antidote to a poiſon.

HENRY.

HIATUS.

LETTER CCCIX.

MY dear Harry may be perfectly aſſured that I never did, nor will breathe the ſlighteſt hint of any thing that he deſires may be kept a ſecret; for my chief ambition is, to be conſidered as his firſt friend and ſole confident. I own I think, with the greateſt pleaſure, that while you are loving me as a young woman, my mind is from your converſe gaining ſtrength, and forming itſelf by your example, in ſuch a manner as will, I hope, render me worthy of your eſteem, at that æra of life, when tenderneſs and complacency alone, unmixed with deſire, ſhall remind you of my ſex. Thoſe are the days, in which, contrary to the general notion of women, I look forward for the moſt real happineſs. I anticipate a future time, when the dear object of our preſent care, ſhall more than repay us for the anxiety which muſt attend his infant years, by performing ſome noble, generous act, when I ſhall look with tranſport on the ſon, and bleſs the father's virtue.

I find myſelf warming into a kind of rhapſody, but were it not for ſentiments like theſe, I ſhould not be able to ſupport your abſence: indeed it is not a common huſband I lament, nor is my ſorrow for our ſeparation, of the common kind. But to the Almighty, and your will, I ſhall endeavour to become reſigned.

Notwithſtanding the frequent occaſions I have had of admiring that elegance of expreſſion, with which you ſay the kindeſt things, I ſtill find myſelf not only charmed, but ſurprized, at every new proof, of what I was certain of before; and ſure there never was any thing more polite or kinder than thoſe reaſons that you urge, for the additional

expence

expence of my being taught to draw, &c. Let the great and rich, who have it in their power to confer favours, come and learn from you the generous art of making them truly ſuch. Adieu!

My every thing,

FRANCES.

LETTER CCCX.

Dear FANNY,

I AM juſt returned from the farm, and amuſed myſelf on the road, with framing a parallel, or compariſon, after the manner of Plutarch, between Arthur's character and mine. I ſhall here ſet down my reflections upon this ſubject; in which, if I ſay any thing, on my own part, which may ſavour of vanity, you are to obſerve that there is nobody by, but you and me, that I ſpeak rather from your opinion of me, than my own, and you are alſo to attend to this maxim of Fontenelle,

"Il eſt bon de faire valoir."

You know that univerſal benevolence is our diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic; but from what I have taken notice of in him, and contemplated in myſelf, I think that his virtue is *natural*, mine *philoſophic*. What leads me into this diſtinction is, that he never was ſenſible of this quality in himſelf, 'till I firſt obſerved upon it to him; but as I have, a great while, been conſcious of this turn of mind in my own breaſt, I ſuſpect that the labour, with which I was obliged to improve an uncouth nature, might have impreſſed the ſenſe of it more ſtrongly on my idea; or, might not the little attention, which I have all my life remarked in the generality of mankind, toward that great moral affection, have occaſioned this virtue in my own nature, to appear

appear more emphatically to my notice? but, as this obſervation muſt have been equal in him, I ſhall proceed upon my firſt diſtinction.

Then, his virtue muſt be allowed to have more *excellence*, but mine more *merit*: his is the jewel, mine the paſte; both of which have equal beauty, in appearance, but tho' the firſt is moſt precious, the latter has this advantage, that broken, it may be made whole again, which the former is incapable of; for to explain the allegory, 'tis obſerved that the temper which is made by philoſophy, is more ſteady, and recovers its ſpring better, than that which is the pure gift of nature.

'Tis certain that excellences, founded in the natural conſtitution, are more rare and eſtimable; but virtues that can ſtand the loſs of health, the diſappointments of fortune, and the temptations of the world, muſt be ſecured by ſenſe, philoſophy, and religion.

However, to return to my compariſon; our virtues appear to be ſo far alike in this, that nature, thro' habit, has formed his principle, while philoſophy, by the ſame habit, has improved my nature: and I flatter myſelf farther, that our mutual affection proves by ſympathy, our nature's ſimilar; for mere art is jealous of emulation, and conſtantly at war with rivals.

But in truth, nature alone, unaſſiſted by principle, or any principle which has no foundation in our nature, can neither of them, for any length of time, ſupport that tenor in a perſon's conduct, which properly frames what is ſtiled a character.

Here now, if you was a ſcholar, I could give you a quotation applicable, from Horace: which however, I ſhall venture to ſend you for the explanation of ſome of your learned acquaintance.

——Ego, nec ſtudium, ſine divite venâ,
Nec rude quid proſit video ingenium, alterius ſic
Altera poſcit opem res, et conjurat amicé.

Adieu,

HENRY.

LETTER CCCXI.

My dear FANNY, Monday.

YOU know that I promiſed you to be in town, by the latter end of this week, but this day Mr. W. determined not to go, ſo I have now neither buſineſs or pretence, to carry me thither. I am very certain, that any other woman would fall into a pout at this diſappointment, would be affronted, ſay I trifled with her, and that I was glad of any excuſe for ſtaying away, &c. But becauſe you are a good girl now, ſubmit with prudence and reſignation to the irkſome exigencies of affairs, can be ſorry, without being angry, and bear diſappointments without repining—(I hope I am telling truth, all this while) I ſhall be in Dublin by Friday night's ſtage, without any other buſineſs, but that of my life, love, tho' I can afford to ſtay with you but one week only.

HENRY.

LETTER CCCXII.

Dear FANNY, Wedneſday.

I STILL hold my reſolution, (or rather purpoſe, for *reſolution* loſes its name, where inclination leads.) of being in Dublin on Friday evening, and have ſent to Kilkenny, to take a place accordingly.

But,

But, my ſervant is juſt returned, and brings me word, that the ſtage is already full.

This was certainly a provoking diſappointment to me at firſt thought; but, upon recollection, I am well enough pleaſed at it, for the following reaſons. You are but a young philoſopher, and frequent occaſions of exerciſing your temper are requiſite to prevent your dwindling into mere woman again. I am myſelf, an old Stoic, 'tis true, but the mind relaxes as well as the body, for want of exerciſe, and uſe is as neceſſary to maintain virtuous habits, as to acquire them.

Now, if I do not meet mortifications and diſappointments, when I am from you, what can I find to exerciſe my philoſophy, while I am with you? Therefore, ſince the ſtage has failed our expectations, as what *ſtage* of life does not! (you may ſee I am at my wits edd, by this punning, and labouring under affliction by the dulneſs of my moral) I muſt cut your hopes ſhort, by letting you know, that I ſhall mount my horſe, and dine with you two hours after you receive this letter.

Your's,

JONATHAN HUMBUG.

LETTER CCCXIII.

I HAVE but juſt time to tell my dear Fanny, that I am ſtill alone, but rejoice in any ſolitude except what ſhe occaſions. I have juſt looked up at *Oliver Cromwell's* picture, and do now forgive him all his vices, for having, as 'tis ſaid, eſtabliſhed the poſts throughout theſe kingdoms. To

"Converſe familiar with the illuſtrious dead."

is certainly a charming employment of time, but what employment of life can we have, without a

living converſe? And, when thoſe we love are abſent from us, how agreeable does the communication of a correſpondence, ſupply that loſs?

Adieu, my only correſpondent.

HENRY.

LETTER CCCXIV.

Dear HARRY,

I NOT only forgive the vices of Cromwell, but bleſs his memory, for affording me the charming means of converſing thus with you. Fitz Oſborne ſpeaks very prettily upon this ſubject, in one of his letters to Cleora; but, alas! nothing he, or even you can write, will ever make me amends, for the loſs of that nearer, and more intimate converſe, where our eyes and looks reply to each others queſtions, and catch their meaning before half expreſſed. Some years ago, you thought as I do now.

I find that my regret at your abſence, increaſes daily, I feel myſelf more miſerable from our laſt ſeparation, than ever I did before, from the ſame cauſe; ſo that neither uſe, time nor neceſſity, produce their ordinary effects upon me, in this particular. However, I am well aware, that "ſhort abſences urge ſweet return," between thoſe who truly love; but, I fear the frequency of them, may, at length abate the tender ſenſations, they at firſt occaſioned, in you, whoſe ſteady philoſophy is for ever on its guard, againſt any thing which looks like weakneſs. But enough of this ſubject; for my repinings will not, alas! cannot remedy it.

Adieu!

FRANCES.

LETTER CCCXV.

YOU wrong me much, by ſaying that my philoſophy is on its guard againſt every tenderneſs; no man indulges himſelf more in fond affections, than I have always done. I did ſo at firſt, from inclination, becauſe I found it pleaſant; and next, from principle, becauſe I thought it virtuous: Whenever I have ſeem'd to want that tenderneſs, it was owing, either to my apprehenſion that the appearance of it, or the indulging it too far, might in ſome ſort, injure ſome more intereſting concern; or that perhaps, I might have thought the perſon at that time, not the proper object of tenderneſs. And while there are various paſſions in the human breaſt, each will be excited in its turn, according as varying occaſions ſhall call them forth.

Fear not that frequent abſence may at length create indifference; for preſent, or abſent, no perſon, thing, or circumſtance, can ever make me love you leſs, or even ceaſe to love you better, if poſſible, except yourſelf. Let but your cleverneſs, and ſure 'tis worth exerting, be but equal to my love and conſtancy, which it does by no means naturally fall ſhort of, and this world cannot produce a more happy pair.

Adieu!

HENRY.

LETTER CCCXVI.

I HAVE often had reaſon to complain of your provoking philoſophic calmneſs, but I think, never more than now. When I tell you how tenderly and ſincerely I lament your abſence, you anſwer me with ſaying, that if I was to exert ſome degree

degree of *cleverneſs*, we ſhould be the happieſt pair in the world. Now pray, Mr *Stoic*, what kind of *cleverneſs* is it, that will tranſport me to Maidenhall, or bring you back to Dublin? For I have never known, nor do I deſire to know happineſs, thro' any other medium, than my deareſt Harry's preſence. You may ſay perhaps, that this ſame *cleverneſs* you talk ſo much of, ſhould render me eaſy in a ſtate of ſeparation; but if you think ſo, I poſitively affirm that you are wholly *illiterate*, and are only a philoſopher for the ſtars. I will appeal to any man but an aſtronomer, if your ſpeaking in this very compoſed ſtrain, is not an high affront to me; and whether the being ſeparated from the only perſon we love in this world, is compatible with happineſs, or even with eaſe.

" But if the pangs of abſence you had known,
" You'd feel my real anguiſh by your own."

Even when you are with me, I do not enjoy the happineſs I ought, from my frequent thoughts upon the melancholic ſubject of our parting. I have often confeſſed this weakneſs to you, but now remind you of it, in order to account for what has, and may ſometimes again, appear unaccountable in my manner: I know you have often been ſurprized at my growing ſuddenly grave, when I have been juſt before, in the higheſt flow of ſpirits; my countenance has been o'ercaſt, and my eyes filled with tears; I have been aſhamed to aſſign the cauſe, or perhaps you have not aſked it; but attributed the change to the caprice of my temper, or to the want of *cleverneſs*, which you inculcate ſo frequently. In ſhort, you are not yet acquainted with my heart, nor is it poſſible for you to conceive the romantic tenderneſs of my weak nature. You are a great, big, ſtrong man, and your mind is proportioned to your body; while mine, by the ſame rule, ſympathizes

thizes with the ſlightneſs and diminutiveneſs of my frame. So pray, Mr. *Giant*, talk no more to Mrs. *Emmet*, of exerting ſtrength of mind, unleſs you can teach her, at the ſame time, "by taking thought, "to add a cubit to her ſtature."

Adieu, my dear *Stoick*, you'll excuſe bad ſpelling in a woman.

FRANCES.

LETTER CCCXVII.

I RECEIVED my dear Harry's mandate this morning, and need I tell you how willingly I obey? I ran to Mrs. C——, to ſhew your letter; ſhe immediately accepted of your invitation, and will accompany me to morrow. She drank tea with me this evening, and ſays ſhe had pack'd up all her things, before dinner, while I think I am farther from being ready, than I was when I received your letter; for I can ſo little compoſe the tranſport of my ſpirits, at the thoughts of my approaching happineſs; that I have done nothing, but pack and unpack, miſtake my keys, and confuſe my wardrobe, ever ſince; ſo that I am afraid I ſhall carry but a very heterogeneous dreſs along with me: But I inſiſt upon your promiſe, that we ſhall ſee no manner of company at your houſe.

I accept of this invitation, as the higheſt compliment you could poſſibly pay me, by preferring my company to your too much beloved, tho' well employed ſolitude; and like Adam, before the creation of Eve, found yourſelf but half bleſſed in paradiſe. But Heaven forbid, that our ſociety ſhould be attended with conſequences like theirs, or that the ſerpent ſhould, in any ſhape, have power to deſtroy our happineſs, tho' it may, perhaps, occaſion as much envy in *certain* evil ſpirits, as that of our

our firſt parents; but this I am ſecure of, that no vain deſire of wandering from thy preſence, my ſcene of bliſs, ſhall ever make us wretched.

'Till I have the happineſs of being reſtored to that, Adieu, my deareſt Harry.

FRANCES.

LETTER CCCXVIII.

Dear FANNY, Kilkenny.

OUR aſſizes paſs'd off more quietly than I expected. We have had no ſtrife, but what my happy privileges exempt me from; for being a perſon of no manner of conſequence, I can avoid drinking, without being called to account for it.

The female Sampſon is here, and I called in this night to ſee her. There is nothing but ſlight in her performances, tho' they have really the appearance of Herculean ſtrength. I can't avoid offering a paradox here, by ſaying, that if they were leſs *ſurprizing*, they would be more *extraordinary*; for there have been many inſtances of perſons who have exceeded the ordinary powers of man; ſome one way, ſome another; and while their actions preſerved the bounds of credibility, they conſtituted what is properly ſtiled a wonder; but when once they exceed natural poſſibility, they fall into the claſs of miracles; and our faith failing us, the whole excellence is juſtly attributed to deception, chicanery, or art.

Adieu,

HENRY.

LETTER CCCXIX.

Dear FANNY, Leighlin-Bridge.

I WAS tired of town, and yet left it with regret: I long'd to get home, and yet do not think with ſo much pleaſure of ſeeing Maidenhall, as I imagined I ſhould. The inconſiſtencies of human nature!

I find that we have made a great miſcalculation, with regard to the difference of age, requiſite between man and wife: You affirmed that the huſband ſhould be at leaſt ten years older; and as I always placed an implicit faith in your aphoriſms, without ever enquiring into the philoſophy of the matter, I quietly acquieſced in the *ratio* between us; but I have unluckily met with a treatiſe here, to-day, which ſhews me the error of your computation. It is ſtiled *OEconomia Naturæ*, the author R. Ruſſel, M. D. F. R. S.

In his ſixth chapter, ſpeaking of the moſt perfect ſtate of the ſexes, he fixes men at thirty-five, and women at forty-five; at which periods, he aſſerts the declenſion of their native vigour to begin: Therefore, to obſerve this rule of proportion exactly, I muſt keep myſelf at a ſtand, from the date of this letter, 'till we are able to meet again, upon more equal terms; which, in the ordinary courſe of nature, muſt be about twenty years hence: But proper regimen may bring that period to paſs, within a much ſhorter time; late hours, at night and morning, taking advice oftner than phyſick, *apprehending* yourſelf ill, when alone, and *miſ-apprehending* yourſelf well, when in company, indolence and inactivity, fretting at the aukwardneſs and careleſſneſs of ſervants, &c. will enable us, in a much ſhorter time, to re-enter the liſts, upon *cæteris paribus* terms.

This

This fancy has brought a certain arithmetical quibble to my mind, that I have ſomewhere met with, which propoſes that a man, on the day of marriage, ſhall be thrice as old as his wife, but at the end of a certain given number of years, he ſhall be but twice her age. Now I ſuppoſe, upon this diminution of *Ratio*'s that they might come to an equality at laſt.*

Adieu, my deareſt Fanny, thou beſt loved miſtreſs, and moſt eſteemed wife; thou only object, which when preſent, "increaſed appetite by what "it fed on," and in abſence, created deſire of fruition, as if not enjoyed. But leſt, theſe quaint expreſſions ſhould incline you to ſuſpect, that I rather play the poet, than expreſs the lover; I ſhall, in plainer terms, aſſure you, that my heart dictates more fondly than my fancy can indite; and that never woman was more tenderly beloved, or more ſincerely eſteemed, than you have ever been, by one who comprehends the fondeſt titles of lover and of friend, in the more ſacred character of an

Affectionate huſband.

HENRY.

* This problem may be explained by the following algebraic equation. Wife=15. huſband=45. 45=15 X3. 15+15=30. 45+15=60. 60=30X2.

LETTER CCCXX.

My dear FANNY, Dublin.

MORAL philoſophers ſay, that a man ſhould, every night recollect after what manner he had ſpent the day, ſo as to call himſelf to account for any part of it miſpent, in order to amend his life, for the future. There is ſomewhat like this ſelf-examination, in the conſtant method I obſerve when I am abſent from you, in rendering you a diary every poſt, after what manner, and in what company, I paſs my *exile*.

This morning I walked out to Bradley's villa, or Villakin, as Swift more aptly terms ſuch ſuburbian receſſes, and I was ſurprized to ſee ſuch a ſtring of houſes as have been built along the road, ſince I paſſed laſt that way. Honeſt Abraham, after his plain, hoſpitable manner, cry'd, "Friend Henry, "you are welcome to the country;" to which I replied, "Friend Abraham, thou art welcome to "the town;" for in reality the city has communicated itſelf to the country, by a chain, like electricity;* ſo that I am at a loſs, whether one may ſtile this retreat a *rus in urbe*, or an *urbs in rure*.

The antient mythologiſts have framed a fable, that Aſtrea had forſaken the city, and printed her laſt footſteps in the country; upon which hint, I ſuppoſe that the poets have ſtiled Liberty the mountain nymph. One might imagine that our citizens were in purſuit of theſe goddeſſes, who are cloſe confederates; for in a ſhort time, I dare ſay, they

* Suppoſe a chain of men in contact, for an hundred miles; if the firſt perſon be electrified, the laſt one ſhall receive the ſhock, at the ſame inſtant; or, if there was a cord extended ſo far, held by a man at each end, the ſame effect would follow.

will

will have extended their line as far as the Wicklow mountains: And, as the propheſied time of the *gathering in of nations*, is not far off, this period ſeems to be already begun, by the connecting of counties together.

But this extravagance methinks, ſhould be reſtrained by the legiſlature, upon this political hint from hiſtory, That when a deniſon of Rome, became a citizen of the world, that empire grew unwieldy, *Ruit mole ſuâ*, and was ſoon after overwhelmed, like the tower of Babel, by the confuſion of tongues. At leaſt, this is the moral that Sheridan would extract, from this portion of hiſtory; as he makes the preciſion of language the chief bulwark of a ſtate. However, I have a good opinion of his treatiſe on Britiſh education, tho' I have been tempted to make a ludicrous alluſion to it, upon this occaſion.

Friend Abraham ſeemed, in his manners, to partake of this *concatenation* of ſituation; for he received me with all the hoſpitality of a country ſquire, but left me at liberty, with regard to wine, as citizens generally do. There is no nation in the world, that is ſo remarkably guilty of the unnatural abſurdity of preſſing to drink, as this kingdom; for which reaſon, I think that we may ſtile this miſtaken piece of hoſpitality an *Iriſh blunder*. The moſt unpardonable kind of rape is, that which is committed upon the underſtanding; becauſe it is a vice to which the raviſher can have no manner of temptation, and from which the injured perſon can poſſibly receive neither advantage or pleaſure.

It is fabled that ſome of the ſcoundrels of the Pantheon had violated a maid; upon which the victim prayed to be transformed into ſuch a creature as might render her misfortune no ſort of diſgrace to her; and on this ſolicitation, ſhe had the ſatisfaction to find her ſex immediately aſſume the

maſculine gender. I think that the ſame poetical juſtice ſhould metamorphoſe a drunken perſon into a hog.

Farewel,

HENRY.

HIATUS.

LETTER CCCXXI.

Dear FANNY,

YOU complain that you are deprived of the middle poſt, by the awkwardneſs of my ſituation, and immediately you ſee, I have overcome that difficulty, by your receiving this on Wedneſday; but do you know how I contrive it? Even by carrying this letter myſelf to Kilcullen bridge. You know my old way always to give warning. "The pic-"quet friend diſmiſſed, &c." and I ſhall dine with you in about three hours, after you receive this.

The account of your illneſs, joined to my charming dream or viſion, I don't know which to call it, have rendered me ſo impatient to ſee you, that I am reſolved to hazard the *coute qui coute*, for that pleaſure. I ſhall ſteal to you *incog*, and keep cloſe quarters, 'till I have ſettled my affairs. If I am to be in confinement, I chuſe to make you my goaler.

My reaſons for thus adviſing you before hand, are, that I was afraid the ſurprize of ſeeing me ſo unexpectedly, and not knowing upon what terms I came up to Dublin, might have too ſudden an effect upon you, in your preſent ſituation. I thought alſo that if you ſhould receive this letter, an hour or two before I arrived, you would have that hour or two's pleaſure of expectation. Laſtly, I was afraid

afraid you might have been gone to dine abroad, and tho' no-body loves to be alone better than I, yet I chuſe rather to be *alone with you.*

Adieu!

Your fond and faithful huſband,

HENRY.

LETTER CCCXXII.

Dear FANNY, Maidenhall, Sept. 4, 1754.

LET this piece of galantry be received as a truth, that I actually kept the bearer five days, to wait 'till my peaches and nectarines ſhould grow ripe: But leſt I ſhould detain him 'till next ſummer, for that purpoſe, I have at length diſpatched him with the moſt forward fruit I could collect from my walls. I deſire that you would not judge them of a bad kind, from their preſent flavour, for there is a certain criſis in all things, as well as virtue,

Quos ultra, citraque, nequit conſiſtere rectum.

And *fruits* both natural and metaphorical, that ripen before their time, are obſerved ſtill to retain the rawneſs of prematurity, or protracted beyond their date, betray the vapidneſs of a latter ſeaſon. You know the characteriſtic of a page's wit, *pert at fourteen, and dull at forty*, and with regard to thoſe, whoſe intellects mature but ſlowly, the expreſſion of a *green old-age*, is a moſt apt deſcription.

The *prime* of life is the critical ſeaſon, and every thing analogous to it, muſt certainly yield the moſt agreeable flavour. I do not play this *Jeu d'Eſprit* merely to exerciſe that talent, but to ſhew you that even matrimony has not abated my galantry toward you, ſo far as to prevent me from behaving or

ſpeaking to you as a lover; and be aſſured that whenever I fail to act up to that gay character, it is only when my eſteem for your ſenſe, chaſtens my fondneſs for your perſon.

My leg is perfectly well now, thanks to the care of my three nurſe-tenders, at Old Court; in return for which I have ſent Miſs Cave, a damaſk table cloth, of my own compoſition intirely, from the ſowing to bleaching; and to Miſs Reddin, ſome lawn of the ſame manufacture; but as for my *Æglé*, *huic aliud mercedis erit.* I have ſent you two "*ſcraps* "*of Latin to puzzle your vicar.*"

I behaved to Will like a fellow traveller on our journey, and have not employed him in the leaſt ſervile office, ſince he came hither. I look upon him as your ſervant, not mine, and upon that account have treated him as civilly as a *fellow ſervant.* I have a pleaſure in behaving and ſpeaking to you, after this manner, for indeed, never woman had, at the ſame time, in the ſame perſon, ſo fond a huſband, and ſo galant a lover; in both of which characters I ſubſcribe myſelf, my deareſt life,

Your's for life.

HENRY.

LETTER CCCXXIII.

Old-Court.

I Received my deareſt Harry's too genteel letter. You often diſtreſs me.——After I have exerted my utmoſt powers to repay the kindneſs of your actions, I find myſelf often remaining ſtill a debtor, for the politeneſs of your expreſſions.

You ought never to have married. A friend and a miſtreſs, was the plan of life for you. Your ſincerity

ſincerity and galantry would be ſufficient work for two perſons to render juſtice to. My utmoſt endeavours are too faint, to make ſuitable returns to both; unleſs, like Heaven, you accept a perfect will, for an imperfect deed. You may ſay, that the hint I have given here, comes ſomewhat too late, for the preſent; but you ſhould never have had it elſe. However, I may die, and I would warn you againſt a ſecond marriage. Indeed my Harry, ſecond marriages are wicked things; 'tis counteracting the deſigns of Providence, for if it had thought proper to continue us in a ſtate of wedlock, it would not have diſſolved the union.

If you had ſeen me this morning with Will, you would have thought me rather, his *fellow ſervant*; for I ſat in the kitchen an hour after he came in, aſking him queſtions about dear Maidenhall, what ſort of ſervants you have there, what kind of houſe you keep, whether your uncle, or any of the reſt of your family, ſeem to ſuſpect our marriage, &c. &c.

I have taſted your fruit, and thought the flavour moſt delicious; perhaps it was like Eve, becauſe it was forbidden. Oh my deareſt Adam, how wretched has this accidental thought rendered me this inſtant! leſt your fondneſs for me ſhould ever be the occaſion of your being expelled from that delightful Eden. The only comfort I have, upon this reflection is, that it was not my fault, but rather owing to my having reſiſted ſtronger temptations, than that unhappy woman yielded to.

Your Latin ſentences always vex me. I feel a ſort of diſappointment, as if a line was blotted; or a certain impatience, ſuch as curious people are affected with, upon obſerving a whiſper in company; ſtraining to liſten, and longing to know what it was about. I pray you, good Mr. Bays, *pen me no more of your whiſpers*, but ſpeak out for the future.

Adieu, my dear *Silenus*, you may ſee by this hint, that all your learning is not able to puzzle the erudition of my worthy vicar.

FRANCES.

P. S. Upon looking over this letter, I find I have been *calling you names*, from beginning to ending.

LETTER CCCXXIV.

My dear FANNY,

THESE three or four days journeying have fatigued me greatly, as I have lain by ſo long; beſides the weather has been extremely warm. I think I may well paſs for an hero now, according to the claſſical expreſſion, *patiens pulveris, atque ſoli*, one who can endure duſt and heat.

I was ſtruck on Thurſday laſt, with *un coup de ſoleil*, which gave me an head-ach for twelve hours: You know that I had received *un coup de lune* before, ſo that I am now a fit tenant, either for *Bedlam* or *Parnaſſus*.

"And thin partitions do the bounds divide."

The brain alſo, is parted into two cells, or *principalities*; the *ſinciput* we will aſſign to madneſs, as folly is ever forward; and the *occiput* to genius, becauſe merit is always backward: So that a perſon may very well be, or wit or bedlamite, as either the * *brother* or *ſiſter* ſhall aſſume their departments; and their acting in conjunction, makes him a poet. In alluſion to this diſtinction, we may obſerve upon Biceps Parnaſſus, that it has one pinacle ſacred to Apollo, and the other dedicated to Bacchus equal-

* Phœbus and Diana, whoſe other appellation was Luna.

ly

ly divided between wit and rage; from which hint I ſuppoſe was derived the proverb, *parum vini acuit ingenium.* You muſt know that this ſame *parum* is a certain meaſure among the antients, which the commentators have not preciſely defined: I underſtand it to be a pint, but ſome dictionaries render it a quart, while others conſtrue it into three pints. But let the *quantum ſufficit* be what it may, a genius is the firſt thing required, for it is not every one who bears the Thryſus † that is inſpired by Bacchus.

Adieu!

† A javelin dreſſed up with ivy leaves, carried in the Bacchanalian proceſſions.

LETTER CCCXXV.

IT gives me ſincere concern that you ſtill continue ill. Curſe on Eve, who intailed that curſe upon your helpleſs ſex: However, to make you ſome amends for this misfortune, Tireſias of old, determin'd a certain point in your favour; any ſchool-boy can tell you the ſtory.

What ſympathy between us! I never had ſo ſevere a cholic in my life, as I had all that day you complain of. While a part of me is a part of you, that racking diſorder muſt be the conſequence; for it has become at length, ſo much a piece of my frame, that one may as well think to make a crooked noſe ſtraight by phyſick as to reſcue my conſtitution from this malady, by the power of medicine. Such torment as I ſuffer was never felt but twice before; the firſt time, when Jonas was kicking the guts of the poor whale about, to make it caſt him up again; and the ſecond, when ſome antient uſurer, I forget his name, had his thirſt of gain quenched, by having ſome molten gold poured down his throat.

Adieu, my charming woman, and

" If there be yet another name more free,
" More fond than *huſband*, make me that to thee."

Believe me that I never received more pleaſure, in my life, from your correſpondence, than I have done ſince our laſt parting, except that article of your letter where you mention your illneſs. The ſaying, upon the failure of our tickets, *The worſe luck now, &c.* was in a different ſtile from your uſual deſpondeacy. I am in hopes of making a philoſopher of you in time, and with that hope, I hope alſo, that you may have every day leſs occaſion for the trial.

I ſend you a letter I received laſt poſt, from Mr. ——, to ſhew you, that in one happy particular, with regard to your merit, all men of ſenſe think as I do.

Farewel,

HENRY.

LETTER CCCXXVI.

My FANNY,

AFTER I had ſealed my former letter, this morning I could not reſt eaſy, at not having heard from you by laſt poſt. I was certain that you would not have neglected it, if you had not been ill. Upon which I ſent to ſearch the poſt-office, which gave me but little relief, tho' I did find a letter there, as it mentions the hazardous ſtate you are in. I do intreat that you will attend to your preſent condition; and make a difference between your manner of living, when with child, and when not; both with regard to hours, food, quantity, and quality. Conſider, that a woman during her lying-in, is in a high fever, and ſhould therefore

therefore take eſpecial care to preſerve the temper of her blood, as cool as poſſible, while ſhe is advancing toward that criſis. Reflect conſtantly upon this moral, that *a double duty requires a double diligence.*

An execution came down this day, againſt our friend Mr. Coſby, at the ſuit of Mrs. S—. You may remember the ſtory, he had made her a preſent of an hundred pounds, and afterwards paſſed his bond to her for the money, upon her complaining that ſhe could not get a ſufficient ſecurity for it. What baſeneſs and ingratitude in this world! Oh live, for my ſake! I ſhall become a ſecond Timon, ſhould you leave me alone!

Adieu!

HENRY.

HIATUS.

LETTER CCCXXVII.

Dear HARRY,

IT gives me great pleaſure to hear that you and our dear child, are with our worthy friend at *the farm.* You taſte at once pure air and pure friendſhip, the higheſt *rural* enjoyments; for I believe that the latter, any more than the former, is not to be met with in populous cities. Our little animal is as yet, only capable of receiving benefit from the firſt, but I hope that he will live to have as juſt a *ſenſe* of Mr. Newburgh's virtues, as his father, and as high a *reſpect* for them, as his mother. I fancy I ſee him ſcampering round the fields, graſping at butterflies; and extending the proſpect thro' a ſeries of years, I find the purſuit *continued*, not *improved*, after the higher trifles of his *graver*, but not *wiſer* age. His miſtaking every

place that was not Dublin, for Danesfort, or Maidenhall, as thoſe are the only country ſeats he ever ſaw, was extremely natural. The dear fellow! as his knowledge increaſes, he will find the world growing larger, but as his virtue improves he will think it every day, diminiſhing to a point. My bleſſing to him, and pray ſay every thing for me to your agreeable hoſts, that you think I would ſay, if I could expreſs my gratitude for their kindneſs toward him.

I am undone for want of books; I wiſh you could contrive to ſend me ſome. This is the ſeaſon for poetry, the luxuriant beauties of nature, ſeem now to warrant the moſt romantic deſcription, and give the air of truth to fiction. This uſed to be our favourite month; I ſtill retain a fondneſs for it, and wiſh, if poſſible, more ardently for your company, at this ſeaſon of the year, than any other; and yet you do not ſpeak of coming to me. Farewel, and accept as your due, the ſincereſt love and duty, from your faithful and affectionate wife.

FRANCES.

LETTER CCCXXVIII.

The Farm.

YOUR letter was extremely pretty, nay more, that is, it was *your* letter. Arthur would read it, he was not content with hearing it. When he obſerved the ſmallneſs of the type, he wiſhed for microſcopic eyes. However, he made a ſhift to go thro' it, with the help of ſpectacles, tho' the ink was ſo pale, that Mrs. Newburgh, who looked over him, called it the meer *ghoſt* of a letter: no ſays he, after his happy manner of expreſſion, 'tis the very *ſpirit of writing*. He then declared, that he

he liked your letters ſo much better than mine, in the * Series, that he went thro' the two volumes a ſecond time, firſt looking for the ſign Frances, as one does in the Spectators, for the marks C.L. I. O. * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * Mrs. N——— was charmed with your letter alſo; however, in her lively way, ſhe excepted to the cloſe of it; thoſe poor-ſpirited expreſſions of love, duty, &c. ſays ſhe, are apt to make huſbands vain and domineering. Your diſtinguiſhing between my *ſenſe* of Arthur's virtues, and only ſaying your *reſpect* for them, was perfectly pretty and polite, and was much obſerved upon here. It was indeed, agreeable to your modeſty, but not to your merit.

Adieu,

HENRY.

HIATUS.

LETTER CCCXXIX.

My deareſt HENRY,

I CANNOT ſay that I ever met with a ſeverer ſhock than your laſt letter gave me. I am far from being ſanguine in my expectations; yet from my thorough knowledge of your ſenſe and virtue, I had perſuaded myſelf that you could not fail of ſucceſs, with ſouls allied to yours, by kindred merits. But that worſe than Lucifer, that unprovoked, untempted fiend, has marred the flattering proſpect, and rooted up the laſt poor twig of hope. Yet, notwithſtanding this cruel outrage on your character, I think, that your going to England immediately, is the only expedient left to

* The firſt edition.

vindicate yourſelf, and regain your inteteſt. You cannot expect any thing here, from lukewarm friends, and potent enemies.

I can now account for Mrs. D——'s letter, which ſurprized me much at firſt, and for your ſeeming indifference about going to England; which, pardon me, I attributed before to your natural indolence. But I have not words ſufficient now, to expreſs my gratitude for your tenderneſs, in concealing this and every other diſagreeable event, as long as poſſible, from my too unphiloſophic heart.

I was attacked two days ago with a ſevere diſorder in my ſtomach, attended with an uncommon heavineſs and heat: I apprehended I was taking a fever, and was quite reſigned; but I will ſtruggle with it now; I would not, like a coward, quit my friend in diſtreſs; but by patiently partaking, endeavour to alleviate his misfortunes, who has been the bleſſed ſecond cauſe, of all the happineſs that I have ever known.

" Thy riſe of fortune did I only wed,
" From its decline, determin'd to recede?
" Did I but purpoſe to embark with thee,
" On the ſmooth ſurface of a ſummer's ſea,
" Where gentle zephyrs play in proſperous
" gales,
" And fortune's favours fill the ſwelling ſails;
" But would forſake the ſhip, and make the
" ſhore,
" When the winds bellow, and the tempeſts
" roar?
" No, Henry, no! one ſacred knot has ty'd
" Our loves, one deſtiny our lives ſhall
" guide,
" Nor wild, nor deep, our common way
" divide." Amen!

FRANCES.

HIATUS.

LETTER CCCXXX.

Dear FANNY,

MR. —— has run away from his wife, and lodges in ſome garret, incog. He has not gone near his office this fortnight, for fear of meeting her. He viſits every evening at ———, and paſſes his time between between tears and curſes. He ſays, that he has been theſe ſeveral years endeavouring to wean her from the beaſtly vice of drinking; but finding it in vain, he uſed to ſpend moſt of his time abroad; which led him into expences that he could ill afford; therefore he has been obliged to live much at home, of late; and ſays, that her temper is grown ſo diabolical, that it is impoſſible to deſcribe the perverſeneſs of it; inſomuch, that he thinks, if he had ſtaid a quarter of an hour longer in his houſe, he muſt have been tempted to throw her or himſelf out of the window.

He ſays, that he had endeavoured to conceal the whole of her behaviour from the world, as long as he could, in hopes of her being in time, reclaimed to a proper ſenſe of decency and duty; and has often aſſumed the appearance of eaſe and fondneſs, while his heart was aching and reſenting. Which may reconcile the difference of our opinions upon this couple, while we held any intercourſe with them. I ſaid, from *her* behaviour, he muſt abominate her; and you ſaid, that from *his*, he muſt be fond of her.

He was a kind and indulgent huſband, and was not aware, that there are certain baſe natures, which not *deſerving* favours before hand, are ſure to *undeſerve*, the more they *receive*; whom generoſity

roſity renders ungrateful, kindneſs unkind, and indulgence but conſtantly prepares more work for itſelf: whoſe uncouth tempers weary the braveſt ſpirits into tameneſs, and treat them after with contempt, for their ſubmiſſion. Nor had the wretched woman herſelf ſenſe enough to know, that averſion is made up of repeated diſguſts, and that love and eſteem may recover from reſentment, but never from averſion. And ſhould grace hereafter inſpire her with reformation, her future merits would be but bringing fuel to a flame extinct: a lifeleſs heap, without warmth or action. She found him willing to be reconciled, after many provocations, and concluding it would be always ſo, indulged her ill temper and perverſeneſs, without reſerve; depending upon her being ſtill able to whiſtle him into tune, when ſhe ſhould herſelf grow weary of the diſcord. Thus the eaſineſs of his temper, has at length, rendered her more wretched, than ſhe would have been, even if he had been as perverſe as herſelf, from the beginning.

Surely a bad wife is the devil's revenge againſt matrimony; and a brothel broil not half ſo indelicate, as the marriage ſtrife. Not but that I think, a little briſkneſs may be neceſſary ſometimes, between man and wife, like winds which diſperſe ſtagnating humours: or may they not be conſidered as *Epiſodes*, which ſerves to relieve the tedioufneſs of the *Main Action?*

Adieu,

HENRY.

LETTER CCCXXXI.

Dear FANNY,

I CANNOT go to you to-day as I deſigned, but to-morrow I ſhall certainly dine with you. I ſend you *The Plurality of Worlds*, which, tho' ill tranſlated, will pleaſe and inſtruct you. I would engage to teach the whole ſcience of aſtronomy, in a fortnight's time, to an intelligent girl of fifteen years old, by explaining it in the eaſy familiar manner, that Fontenelle does in this treatiſe. In truth, I have always found the dogmatical terms more difficult to comprehend, than the ſenſe or meaning of the arts or ſciences themſelves.

Philoſophers have always had a vain affectation of making learning a myſtery, in order to raiſe themſelves high in the opinion of the vulgar; by which means many ſtudies are rendered abſtruſe, by ſcholaſtic preciſions, that would be perfectly intelligible without them. A mathematician will puzzle you in conic ſections, with circles, ellipſes, hyperbola's, parabola's, &c. all which diagrams a grocer's apprentice performs every day in breaking up a ſugar loaf.

Epictetus, in his 12th chapter on Diſputation, is very angry at the generality of philoſophers, who affect technical terms too much; which render ſcience difficult and unintelligible to the illiterate. Socrates's addreſs was admirable in this particular, who in the plaineſt ſtile and moſt ſimple manner, without affirming any thing, could make the moſt ignorant peaſant inſtruct himſelf in the ſublimeſt truths.

Indeed *learning* is a difficult thing, but ſenſe and reaſon are eaſy; and in truth, the generality of people need not be ſo ignorant as they are, if philoſophers would deſcend a little from their myſte-

rious heights, and according to the proverb, *while they think with the wife, would talk with the vulgar.*

Farewel,

HENRY.

LETTER CCCXXXII.

Dear FANNY,

I SEND you two letters incloſed, which mention you, I am fond of communicating any compliment from my friends toward you; and in truth, I am ſenſible every day, of a more polite galantry for you, than I was inſpired with when I firſt ſolicited your virgin ſacrifice; and indeed I foreſee nothing but death, which can prevent my loving you with greater affection, even than I do at preſent, in your grand climacteric.

" When thinking of thy charming youth
" I'll love thee o'er again in age."

While you ſhall anſwer me like your favourite Cowley,

" Antient perſon, as thou art,
" Antient perſon of my heart."

In ſhort, there never was a ſoul formed in France, with more galantry than mine, but as phlegmatic as a Dutch tobacconiſt's, where my affections are not engaged. I think, ſaving his wit, I reſemble Swift in this particular, whoſe manners were grave and ſequeſter'd, rough and unpoliſhed in his addreſs, by nature a ſatyriſt, rather than panegyriſt, and more the philoſopher than the lover: but, in all his writings to Stella, the four academic diſappears, and one would imagine he had been educated in a court. I mean, to avoid equivocation, the court of Auguſtus. Let us teach the ſlaves of Hymen,

Hymen, what it is to be free; and ſhew them, that as love inſpirits duty, duty in return gives conſtancy to love. I have, thanks to your worth, already got my leſſon *by heart*, and I much hope that yours is not yet to learn. Farewel, my charming Iphigenia, and believe me to be your inſpired

CYMON.

LETTER CCCXXXIII.

Dear FANNY, Stradbally-Hall.

I HAVE got ſo far on my journey, having bought a horſe for my ſervant at Smithfield yeſterday. He is the moſt curious little nag you ever ſaw, and what is extraordinary, Richard choſe him among a dozen. It is a mankeen in *miniature*, and you know he is himſelf a gag in *magnitude*. It was drole to ſee the fellow walking thro' the ſtreet, with a horſe between his legs. I have been paid his price, in laughing at the couple already. He does not mount by the ſtirrup, but ſeats himſelf ſide-ways, like a woman; and then ballancing with his whip, as if he was riding the *London Taylor*, throws himſelf acroſs the ſaddle with great *equilibre*. But in truth, he has no occaſion for a ſaddle, for, *if it was not for the name of a horſe*, &c. If he had been equerry to Procruſtes*, he would certainly have cut off half a yard of his legs, at leaſt. I often wiſhed they had been made like a ſhoemaker's meaſure, to ſlide in according to the ſize one wanted to fit. I tried ſeveral experiments on my journey, to accommodate the diſproportion between man and horſe. At

* He was a tyrant, who had a certain bed, which he uſed to adapt his captives to, by curtailing or extending their length.

firſt,

firſt, I made Richard lead him, as you have ſeen dogs harneſſed ſometimes; but the horſe uſed to run giddily between his legs, and throw the poor fellow down. I then ſeated him like a Mandarin, with his legs croſſed under him; but Houhnymn, like all little animals, was too fiery for ſuch *manage*. At laſt, I cropt his ears, ſhore his mane, pared his hoofs, and dock'd his tail; then I got his rider cloſe ſhaved, clipp'd his nails, ſtruck off a heel-tap from each of his boots, and took my pocket-book out of the valece; by which means I lighten'd them both ſufficiently, to come through the journey tolerably well, only ſtopping now and then at ſome plaſhes of water, till Richard lifted him over. In ſhort, the whole equeſtrian figure ſeemed to reverſe the fable, for it was *the mouſe in Labour of the mountain*.

In one of your late letters, you ſay, that you relieve abſence by being ſilly: you may ſee by this letter, that I have taken the ſame method alſo: but do not, like withered ſages, deem mirth to be folly: the politeſt people think differently; for Rire is French philoſophy: 'tis alſo the moral of the court of Comus, where you are. Long may their chearfulneſs remain, happy pair! But theirs is a ſtream from a ſtill ſpringing ſource; ours, like ſummer ſhowers, tho' refreſhing, rare!

Adieu,

HENRY.

LETTER CCCXXXIV.

Dear HARRY,

THOUGH the ſcene you paſſed through at B——, muſt have been very diſagreeable, I heartily rejoice at your having ſeen Mr. ——, merely becauſe you ſtand now, acquitted to yourſelf. For though we cannot command events, 'tis winning half, to be able to juſtify ones own conduct. Is there not ſomething particular in your fate, that as ſoon as ever you have any buſineſs material to yourſelf, to tranſact with any one, they immediately begin to doat or die? Mr. —— is the fourth inſtance, and you have had two of each within this year. In ſhort, you are a perſon not only ſingular in yourſelf, but alſo in the peculiarities which happen to you every day. Oh! that to compleat the ſingularity of your *hiſtory*, fortune would adopt you,—on account of your merits! I ſhall ſay no more. I would not wiſh to ſink your ſpirits, and I find it impoſſible to raiſe my own.

With fondneſs and impatience, I expect and wiſh for your return,

"Thou my ſouls joy! whate'er my ſorrows be,
"They ceaſe, or vaniſh on beholding thee."

Adieu, thou beſt, of the beſt character in life, adieu my huſband.

FRANCES.

LETTER CCCXXXV.

Dear FANNY,

I WOULD wait upon you to day, but that I have been extremely ill theſe two days paſt. How ſhall I acquaint you of my diſorder with any politeneſs? It was what the aſtrologers would ſtile being

being under the influence of the *crab aſcendant*, which guides all motions *retrograde*; and diſeaſe was carrying me off, as Cacus uſed to ſteal the oxen.*

I am, thank God, perfectly at eaſe to day, but too weak to travel: beſides, leaving a houſe as ſoon as one is well, is as beggarly a thing, as the moment one has dined. However, as you expected me this day, I think proper to make my apology, leſt you ſhould be alarmed. You ſee of what conſequence I think myſelf, which you will not be ſurprized at, after you have read the three incloſed articles, that I have cut out from the laſt news paper; and which give me reaſon to believe, that *the Lord-like creature* may recover his former dignity again. You will find by the verſes, that the Sapphic age is now returned, when women woo and ſue in vain; and by the advertiſements, that even a hackney coachman has forbad your whole ſex, *woman or women*, to honour themſelves with the illuſtrious name of Scully. *Aſſume my name.* In anſwer to which, you ſee that ſome vain, ambitious fair one, has proclaimed her honour to the world, and threatens to inſtitute a ſuit *to remedy this, and other grievances*, which, in other words is, to be reſtored to her conjugal rights, in the arms of her dear, faithleſs hackney coachman; the being deprived of which happineſs, ſhe publickly declares to be an intolerable *grievance*.

Adieu!

HENRY.

* He uſed to draw them backward by the tail, to prevent their being traced.

LETTER CCCXXXVI.

Dear FANNY,

YOU are too deſponding about our election, and the colleagues here, are not more heroic; but as for my part, I ſhall keep up my ſpirit till the trial is over; and nothing then ſhall abate it, but ſucceſs; for I will double it upon a defeat. If I cannot be Hercules I will be Antæus.

For ſome months paſt I have been obliged to live in a ſort of familiar converſe, among our *voters*; and I have ſeen more of the knavery, meanneſs, and inſincerity of the lower claſs of mankind, in that ſhort time, than I had ever experienced, or would even ſuffer myſelf to imagine, in my whole life before. This has brought me to ſuſpect, that there may poſſibly be ſomething more in being *well-born*, than I uſed generally to attribute to it. In all my future dealings with the world, I ſhall *beware of the dunghill.*

We are moſt cordially dull here, without Mrs. —— and you. I always thought the beſt furniſhed houſe looked naked, without a woman; the moſt elegant feaſt, like a campaign meſs; and a bolſter with but one pillow; like a ſick man's couch. Oh haſte, and reſtore us to ourſelves, our home, our bed and board!

Adieu!

HENRY.

LETTER CCCXXXVII.

Dear FANNY,

WHEN I came here, I found clerks employed, to make out ſome forty copies of two late letters of mine to Mr. ——. I never deſigned them

them for public view, or I would have wrote them more correctly; nay, I thought ſo little about them, that I did not even ſhew them to you, who was in the houſe when I wrote. He thinks they will do him ſervice, but I can't ſee how; except by ſhewing his candidneſs, in publiſhing reproofs againſt himſelf, as well as againſt his enemies.

However, there is a pleaſure in exciting gratitude; I have done better things for other people, who have either appeared inſenſible at the time, or ſeemed to have forgot them immediately after. But this ſhall never diſcourage me; I have a way of paying myſelf before-hand. 'Tis uſury to expect gratitude.

I have had bad weather, ever ſince I left your *latitude*. The thickeſt miſt here, theſe three days, that ever I ſaw. Pray how did your *air without fog* behave itſelf? But this day is perfectly clear, for the violence of laſt night's ſtorm, has throughly purged the air. There was a very hurricane all night, and the wind ceaſed to blow toward morning, only, as it ſeemed to me, becauſe it was out of breath. I am glad to find the pacquets had ſafely arrived before it, becauſe they have brought us good news: that is, *No news*. Our fears at leaſt, about the two great deaths, are over. *Vivat Rex!*

Amen and adieu!

HENRY.

LETTER CCCXXXVIII.

My dear FANNY,

ALL friends here are well. *My* cholic, for from its peculiarity I may call it *mine*, was my conſtant companion through the journey. Among the

the *ſingularities* which you imputed to me, in a late letter, you may claſs this extraordinary diſorder, which no regimen can keep off, nor no irregularity bring on; which comes and goes, *ex mero motu*, like ideas, which ariſe and vaniſh in the memory, without the minds being able to account for their adduction, or remotion.

Mr. —— and his wife are here. I never ſaw her before; ſhe is a very agreeable kind of woman; neither handſome or genteel; but ſhe has more than painting or ſtatuary can expreſs. I have been long of opinion, that good humour, and amiableneſs of temper, are infinitely preferable to beauty, or even to ſenſe; if ſenſe can be, which I deny, without them.

I heard a piece of news here, Mrs. —— has been obliged to ſell part, and depoſit the reſt of her jewels, to anſwer a preſſing demand, A Play Debt! ſhe was too old and homely to diſcharge it otherways. Her age and perſon ſaved her morals.

My ſincere compliments to Mr. and Mrs. ——, and love to Miſs in her Teens,

Adieu!

HENRY.

LETTER CCCXXXIX.

Dear FANNY,

YOUR opinion that Mr. ——'s uneaſineſs at his wife's abſence, is owing to his fondneſs for her, I hope is juſt; but there is ſuch a thing as being helpleſs and diſſatisfied at being left alone, though we have no great affection for the object of ſociety, when preſent: and this I do ſuſpect, from my knowledge both of the huſband and wife, to be really the preſent caſe. Uſe has a ſovereign

power

power over the mind, and the effect is ſtrongeſt where ideas are feweſt: many perſons go abroad often, by way of not ſtaying at home, while others ſtay at home, only becauſe they will not be at the trouble of going abroad; ſo that from the mere force of habit, ſome go out without pleaſure, while others ſtay within, without enjoyment: and we may ſometimes imagine, that this man diverts himſelf one way, and that another, and may be miſtaken in both. I have known people ſit up half their nights, without the leaſt indulgence in the exceſs; but merely from an averſion of going to bed, have ſat yawning and ſtretching themſelves into convulſions; or ſnored for an hour or two in their chairs, before they could be prevailed on to call for their night caps. The caprices of human nature are infinite; how few ways to be right, and how many to be wrong!

Farewel,

HENRY.

HIATUS.

LETTER CCCXL.

MY deareſt Harry is, I hope, before this, convinced of his injuſtice, in accuſing me of neglect: when I was moſt immerſed in the frolick and gaiety of youth, I never was fool enough to give up the rational happineſs I received from his correſpondence, for any inferior amuſement, but have declined many parties, ſtiled of pleaſure, for the real one of *converſing* with him; for ſo I call writing to thoſe we love. Then what could tempt me to neglect it now? when every thought and tender affection of my heart is dedicated to him and his dear children, who by partaking, increaſe,

rather than leſſen that tenderneſs. 'Tis highly probable that I may not get a meſſenger to carry this letter to the poſt, yet I write for the hazard, and to ſatisfy a fondneſs.

From what you hint, I hope your affairs will ſoon be accommodated; at leaſt in ſuch a way, as may put it in your power to make, even a ſmall proviſion, for that wife, and thoſe children you ſo truly love. We have great reaſon to be thankful for the happy diſpoſition of our dear boy. Indeed there cannot be a better mind, in ſo much youth: to ſum up all, he is my own Harry's epitome: His delicate unflattering tenderneſs, hourly recalls the image of his much loved father; though ſure I need not memento's, to bring you to my mind, who are never abſent from my fond idea: but too conſtant attention, like too intently gazing, may ſometimes make us loſe the object of our contemplation, and our dear Hal is the intervening medium, that recalls and fixes it more ſtrongly. He ſends his duty to you, and mine accompanies, to ſhew this *new-comer* the way.

Adieu!

FRANCES.

LETTER CCCXLI.

Dear FANNY, *Dublin.*

THE weather was ſo bad that I could not get farther than Kilcullen yeſterday. I aſked for Mrs. ——'s apartment and aired her bed for her laſt night: which to do more effectually, I poured a quart of hot punch into the warming-pan. I found our little Kate extremely well; ſhe thrives apace, and will not be ſuch a Queen Mab as you apprehended. The lightning blaſt that ſhe brought

into the world with her, remains in her forehead ſtill. She ought to have been chriſtened Semele, but in compliment to her godmother; who is herſelf more worthy the addreſs of Jupiter, than ever our poor elf will be: which to put paſt a doubt, I muſt acquaint you that ſhe is reckoned very like me.

The day I left you, I went to —— and beſides the poem he has publiſhed, he ſhewed me a large volume in manuſcript; among which there were a great many very pretty things. I aſſure you that this gave me a very ſincere pleaſure, tho' it convinced me that I was never deſigned by nature for a wit, as I felt not the leaſt ſymptom of envy or jealouſy upon ſuch an occaſion. Is this meanneſs a mark of genius or no? Addiſon and Dennis were both infected with it. It depends entirely, upon the moral turn of the mind.

My ſincere compliments to the worthy, friendly and agreeable couple you are with; and ſwear, without perjury, that I am my deareſt Fanny's truly affectionate huſband,

HENRY.

LETTER CCCXLII.

MRS. S—— has had *an affair* lately; ſhe calls it a marriage, and pleads ſome ſtatute, which ſhe ſays, intitles a woman to the rights of widowhood after a ſeven years ſeparation, without receiving the leaſt notice from her huſband, who went *beyond ſeas*, as ſhe expreſſes it. This has been really her caſe, in fact; but how it ſtands in law, I know not. However, I think that a ſeven years marriage even with cohabitation, is a *natural* divorce; for, as philoſophers affirm, that every atom of our bodies is intirely changed in that term

a man

a man and his wife muſt certainly become fornicators at the end of it; therefore your right ſcrupulous chriſtians ſhould be re-married every ſeven years, till they dwindle into that ſtage of life, when, and when only, lovers become Platonics indeed.

I was yeſterday at ——, and was really vexed to ſee ſuch poor doings. There was two hours conſideration, and the whole houſe called into conſultation, the reſult of which was, to give half a guinea toward a charity, where ten ſhould have been given without heſitation. Men huxter ſhillings as if they were to live here for ever, not conſidering that if they had that prerogative, the greater dignity ſhould be in every action of their immortality.

It has been remarked, that perſons in narrow circumſtances make a great diſplay of generous ſentiments, while thoſe who are in affluence, too often betray a contracted mind: but to abate our vanity in this particular, may not the only difference lie here, that the firſt are liberal of what they *have not*, and the latter parſimonious of what they *have?*

Adieu!

HENRY.

LETTER CCCXLIII.

Dear HARRY, *Mallow.*

THO' real illneſs is the cauſe of my preſent retirement, I do not repine, as it purchaſes me a little leiſure to converſe with you and myſelf; which is more than I have been bleſt with, ſince we parted. A violent pain in my ſide has been, with difficulty, allowed an excuſe for not going to

this night's ball, which is the only one I have miſſed ſince I came hither. I have not drank the waters theſe three days, for I imagined they increaſed the diſorder in my ſide, tho' they agreed perfectly well with me, in every other particular. Perhaps, by repairing my conſtitution, they might have augmented that connate complaint of mine;

" The young diſeaſe, that muſt ſubdue at length,
" Grows with our growth, and ſtrengthens with
" our ſtrength."

Indeed, my Harry, both my mind and body are harraſſed beyond meaſure. What would I not give for any little habitation of my own, where I might enjoy the bleſſings which God has given me, a fond huſband, lovely children, and a turn for reading and reflection! But, alas! the proſpect of this charming ſcene, exiſts only in my wiſhes, and like a ſhadow vaniſhes before the piercing eye of reaſon. I do not mean to be ungrateful to Providence, for thoſe bleſſings I at preſent enjoy: I own them far beyond my merits, and hymn the Almighty with devotion for them.

I am certain that if my ſituation in life was ſuch as I have wiſhed, I ſhould have a much higher reliſh for gaiety than I now have; for I do not pretend to deſpiſe the pleaſures of the world, or think, that virtue and wiſdom dwell only with contemplation; they are to be met with every where, even *in the ſtreets*; but tho' my diſpoſition and age naturally incline to chearfulneſs, the conſtant anxiety I feel for the unſettled ſituation, and uncertain ſtate of my husband and children, too often clouds my brow, and makes wan Care uſurp the place of ſmiles.

Adieu!

FRANCES.

LETTER CCCXLIV.

Mallow.

I Thank you for the pleaſure I received from both your letters; I have had a thouſand fears for your ſafety; I was born a coward; I have lived one, and believe I ſhall die ſo: my mind is never eaſy about you one moment; I open your letters with trembling haſte, yet fear to look into them; with different perturbations far, I uſed to read them! You do not acquaint me what has been done in your late affair: I wrote to you already, on this ſubject; perhaps you have not received my letter, for at preſent, I direct at hazard; but ſhall continue to write, to ſatisfy, at once, my duty and inclination.

This is the worſt place in the world, for a perſon in my preſent temper of mind. I think we formerly agreed, that particular happineſs diſqualifies us for general ſociety, more than particular uneaſineſs *; but I had not then felt that kind of ſorrow, which abſorbs the whole ſoul, and connects every object we ſee, and every ſound we hear, with the idea of our own diſtreſs.

The reading a beautiful paſſage, towards the concluſion of Thomſon's poem on the Spring, yeſterday morning, threw my mind into ſuch a ſtate, as is not to be expreſſed. It was a deſcription of happineſs, ſuch as ours might have been, had it pleaſed God to have bleſt us, even with humble competence. I fear I was to blame for murmuring, but indeed I could not help it. That charming picture of rational delight, made me repine at being debarr'd thoſe dear, thoſe innocent,

* Letter C.

thoſe virtuous enjoyments; the tender duty of a faithful wife, and the increaſing joy of a delighted mother: I am, alas! forbid the happy taſk,

——"To rear the tender thought,
"To teach the young idea how to ſhoot,
"To pour the freſh inſtruction o'er the mind,
"To breathe th' enlivening ſpirit, and to fix
"The generous purpoſe in the glowing breaſt.

But, I will ſtay my riſing ſighs, and ſtop my flowing tears; it is not yet too late; and if the all-wiſe diſpoſer ſees it good, he can and will *raiſe* me to that *humble ſtate*, where all my hopes, nay all my wiſhes are centered: where I may ſhare the happineſs of educating our dear children, with the beſt of husbands; where we may behold their ſpring and ſummer without blaſt or drought, and our declining autumn, nay our winter, paſſing without ſtorms away. Amen, to this ſweet prayer.

Adieu. My head aches much, but my heart more!

FRANCES.

LETTER CCCXLV.

Dear FRANCES,

I Received your very pretty, *unphiloſophic* letter; however, you ſpeak very naturally, and ſenſibly too. I perfectly agree with you, in every thought, hope and wiſh; the only difference, that I am leſs impatient at the delay, and more reſigned under the diſappointments of fortune.

The affair you inquire about, ſtands juſt as it did when we parted: I have a reaſon for not preſſing it now; my friends are not quite ſtrong enough.

I do believe that the gay ſcene you are in at preſent, is not very agreeable to you; if you had no other

other objection, the too great hurry of it would be one. You remember my making Miſs —— ſtare once, by an adage of mine, that *I could forgive none but a pickpocket, for loving a crowd.*

Since I came here, I have inquired into the ſtory of Mr. ——, and find it juſt as we had heard it. He is really a man of underſtanding, and yet does many ſilly things. I have known ſeveral perſons of ſenſe, but very few who always uſe it:

—— "They bear it not about,
"As if afraid to wear it out;
"Except on holydays or ſo,
"As men their beſt apparel do."

Adieu!

HENRY.

LETTER CCCXLVI.

Dear HARRY,

IN this ſcene of perpetual hurry and diſſipation, if my letters are frequent, they cannot be long; you muſt therefore be content with a bare ſuperſcription ſometimes, juſt to ſhew that I exiſt, when the *important nothings* I am engaged in, and which have the rank of *moral duties* here, may not allow me time for more. I own too, that I am afraid to truſt myſelf alone, with a pen and ink; the conſequence is hurtful to me; for, contrary to the received opinion, I find it leſs painful to ſuppreſs the uneaſineſs of my mind, than to give it vent. I wrote a long, and of courſe, a melancholic letter to you, laſt poſt; I hope it did not affect you, as much as it did me; but why need I fear? for thou art actually a lineal deſcendant from old Neſtor Iron Side; and misfortunes muſt be *ſledges*, before they can make any impreſſion on you.

I never was, am not, nor ever ſhall be a philoſopher; and what is more, I am far from regretting that want of ſenſibility they boaſt of: I aim at an higher character, that of a *chriſtian*, where feeling is not incompatible with reſignation; and to lament without upbraiding, is not a breach of duty. But enough upon a ſubject, that you and I can never agree about. I rejoice, however, to think that it is the only one, we ever had a diſpute on.

Adieu, and Amen,

So be it.

FRANCES.

LETTER CCCXLVII.

My dear FANNY,

I Acquieſce in your philoſophy, it cannot ariſe from a nobler principle, or ſtronger ſource, than religion. Stoiciſm is too much bravery for a woman. I have very little ſupport from thence myſelf, and leaving out the word *lament*, my philoſophy agrees perfectly with your definition. Heathen philoſophy was founded on pride, the chriſtian on humility; and therefore, more conſonant to the nature of ſo helpleſs and dependant a creature as man.

There are three ſpecies of philoſophy, which I have ſeverally plied with tolerable ſucceſs: one is the ſtoical pride of riſing above all worldly concerns; the ſecond, an acquieſcence in my lot, which naturally induces a ſort of indifference about it; and the third, a habit of turning my thoughts from preſent uneaſineſs, and gloomy proſpects, upon more pleaſant ſcenes and ſubjects, either in the reflections of my own mind, or in the application of proper ſtudies.

I laid

I laid aſide the firſt, becauſe it ſavoured too much of heathen ſelf-ſufficience; I grew aſhamed of the ſecond, for I thought it but the ordinary effect of low ſpirits; and have abided by the latter, becauſe I found it free from my objections to the two former, and have experienced it to be both a more immediate and effectual remedy, than either of the others.

However, it muſt be an advantage to have paſſed through theſe three degrees, for I fancy that the perfection of philoſophy, muſt be compounded out of a proper mixture of them all.

Adieu!

HENRY.

LETTER CCCXLVIII.

My dear HARRY,

I Received your charming philoſophic letter, and remember that you wrote pretty much in the ſame ſtrain to your friend V—— ſome time ago; who, though a man of ſenſe and religion, is, notwithſtanding, as great a *lamenter* as I am. Did he ever anſwer that letter?

I think with you, that philoſophy ſits as awkwardly on a woman, as a ſuit of armour; but there have been amazons in morals, as well as war. For my part, I neither envy nor admire, and of courſe, ſhall not endeavour to imitate the Caracatura. Gentleneſs of manners, and ſoftneſs of heart, are, I think, the moſt amiable characteriſtics of a woman. Let man, like the ſtrong oak, brave the ſtorm, and ſtand unmoved amidſt it; while we, like the ſlight weeping willow, yield before every blaſt; or, like the ſenſitive plant, ſhrink from each preſſure.

I have

I have the pleaſure to inform you, that Thurſday next is fixed for our return to the fort, and I think you will receive this letter time enough, to meet us the next day, at dinner.

Adieu!

FRANCES.

FINIS.